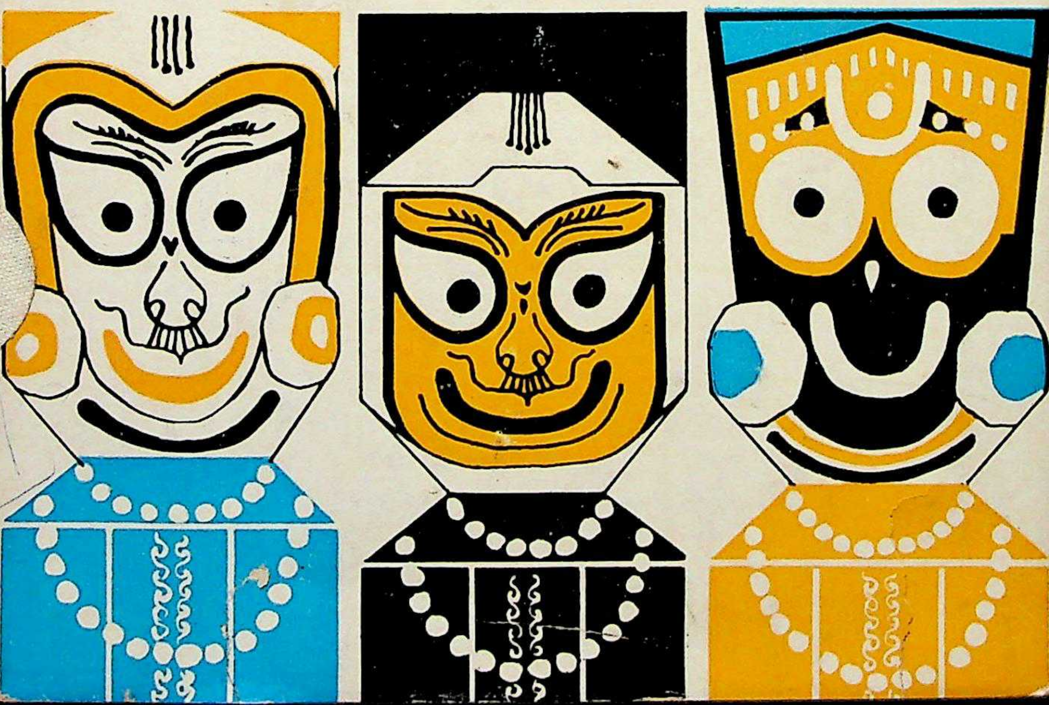
Cultural Tradition in Puri

N PATNAIK



CULTURAL TRADITION IN PURI

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Structure and Organization of a Pilgrim Centre

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Indian Institute of Advanced Study
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Introduction

THE tradition in Puri is a cultural complex consisting of sacred and secular institutions with their religious and social functions, cultural values and symbolic configurations. The axis of this complex is the titular and symbolic relationship between the paramount deity and the paramount king of Orissa. With this God-king system are associated many sub-systems such as monastic order, pilgrimage, kingship, and secular government and ritual service organizations. The cultural roles of these sub-systems in respect of the main system, which forms the core of the cultural complex, are the major aspects of this study. The roles performed by these sub-systems are essentially in the capacity of guardians, specialists, policy makers, and preachers of cultural traditions. The cultural stages where the cultural performances are held and the cultural media through which the cultural traditions are recited, exhibited, and propagated form also major aspects of the structure of tradition.

The cultural complex of Puri is in the process of continuous change and the institutions which comprise the complex are not isolated entities. They are integrated with one another and form an organic whole. A change in one aspect reverberates in others and therefore any dislocation in any of them may have severe repercussions throughout the nexus.

The present study describes the structure and organization of cultural traditions in Puri, a famous pilgrim centre in Orissa, and discusses what changes have come about in the traditions and what factors are responsible for such changes.

Puri provides the best example of the cultural structure described above. This structure is comprised of many sacred and secular institutions and professionals of the cultural tradition. These institutions possess many valuable basic texts and documents which the professionals and specialists make use of in the dissemination of the elements of the tradition and in the regulation of their duties to and organization of the institutions in the regional as well as the national context.

Puri not only provides a forum for the textual and contextual analysis of the social structure and organization of the tradition, but it also serves for the synchronic and diachronic studies of the various problems of the cultural complex. The cultural institutions at Puri are not in isolation. They are in continuous interaction with similar but minor institutions in other parts of India in general and Orissa in particular. An interest in the study of transformations that take place in the institutional pattern of the tradition at Puri and at other places outside it, leads us to look for the lines of communication between them and occasions in which communication with each other takes place and the changes that may have resulted in one or both because of such communication. A study of this nature is diachronic.

Besides the diachronic analysis of the interactional effect of hierarchic Hinduism and village culture on one another, it is absolutely necessary to look to each and every institution or the cluster of the elements which constitute the cultural complex as persisting in space and time. It may be noted that changes do occur in these institutions but they are recurrent so that they sustain the institutions. A study of this type is synchronic in that we regard the cultural complex as a persisting system, and we analyse the recurrent communications between the main and minor cultural centres and between them and the public of the respective localities.

At this stage it is necessary to give an account of Puri town including its general cultural characters which are common to any other ordinary town in India and its sacred features and institutions which make it a holy place and a famous centre of pilgrimage. We have given first an account of its ordinary features and then its sacred contours, the idea being to show the combination of opposite forms in Puri town.

PURI AND ITS EARTHLY CHARACTERS

Puri is a small town (population 50,000 approximately) on the east sea coast in Orissa. It is the headquarters of Puri district, and lies in 19°48′ N and 85°49′ E. It is about 311 miles from Calcutta and 572 miles from Banaras by rail. Towards the latter part of the year 1918 the Howrah-Puri express train was introduced reducing the journey time to 12 hours. This has made it most convenient to the pilgrims to come to Puri in large numbers.

Puri is the focus of a great cultural tradition. It is widely known as a great religious and sacred centre (*Kshetra*) and a place of pilgrimage (*Tirtha*). It owes its size and importance entirely to its connection with the famous temple of Jagannath. Puri is described by those who live in it in the following words:

> It is to India what Jerusalem was to the whole land of Israel. It is the holy land of the Hindus. As the Israelites go up to worship at Mount Zion, so do the inhabitants of the various parts of India go on pilgrimage to the great temple of Jagannath. The very ground around Puri for ten miles is to the Hindu mind of such sanctity as to absolve from the deepest sin all who proceed thither. The priests of Jagannath speak of it as the city of heaven upon earth. They say that the fruit of the trees there is as the fruit of the tree of life, that the tanks contain the waters of immortality, that to bathe in them is far more meritorious than to bathe in all the sacred rivers of India, that the people are all holy, that the goddess of Fortune resides there, that pilgrims may actually eat of food cooked with her own hands, that the gods of heaven over and anon send showers of beautiful scented flowers upon the city, that all the celestial deities would delight to become incarnate there, that the very dust of the city is pure gold and that the great idol is so mighty and gracious that he pardons the sins of those who may

have killed a million Brahmans.[1]

However what does a visitor of modern outlook observe and experience in Puri ?

At the Puri railway station or on the way to Puri the pilgrim-touts (*pandas*) get hold of any visitor to the town and interview him to find out his whereabouts and the names of his ancestors. The whole exercise of the pilgrim-hunters is to find out which *pandas* are his client and whether or not he is on a pilgrimage to Puri. If the visitor's purpose of coming to Puri is not pilgrimage but to study the sacred complex his case is different and in that case he is let free from the hold of the *pandas*. Otherwise the touts lead the pilgrim patrons to their respective *pandas* and look after their boarding and lodging and arrange their ritual performances in the temple of Jagannath and other places of religious importance in and around Puri town.

When he is free from the clutches of the *pandas* the visitor either takes a rickshaw or walks the distance to go to different parts of the town. If it is morning he sees all along the way women of the scavanger community trailing their wheel-barrows packed with cans of excreta collected from the private or public latrines. The visitor must endure both the stench and contact with the flies accompanying the disposal carts.

As he approaches the interior of the town and passes through the narrow lanes the stench becomes most offensive and sickening. He finds that all localities are widely defiled and that there is no underground sewage system. Through the masonry gutters which run through the plinths of the buildings pass fluid refuse and urine from the interior of the houses to the lanes. He can smell the gutter if on verandahs of houses or whenever he walks through the streets. The gutter is an ever-present source of danger to health.

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[1] "Sketch of the Orissa Mission," p. 13, quoted in the *Report on Pilgrimage to Juggernanth in 1868* by David B. Smith, Sanitary Commissioner for Bengal, Calcutta; E.M. Lewis, Calcutta General Press, 5, Council House Street (1868).

Because of the stray bulls which loiter in the lanes and alleys the visitor is forced to keep to the sides of the street where the open drains containing ordure and filthy water run. If he is not careful to keep to his side he gets a push from behind from these bulls and either falls into the open drain or steps on the dirt left exposed. The dirt of the locality is also due to the accumulation from time immemorial of offal and dejecta of every sort thrown by people in heaps at various places of the town.

On his way to the interior of the town and the temple of Jagannath he comes across many tanks—all regarded very sacred. These are the places where people resort for the calls of nature and where the scavangers dump the ordure and deodorized filth making the surroundings extremely insalubrious. These tanks are nothing but stagnant reservoirs full of confervoid growths and heaps of garbage emitting noxious gases. The pilgrims sit down to ease themselves on the banks of these tanks and also in their vicinity, then clean and wash their bodies and take their holy bath in the tanks. They also perform many important rituals in these filthy places.

As he moves further on, he comes across a crowd of lepers with their begging bowls jostling with the public and moving freely from one place to another. On both sides of the street which runs from the temple to the Swargadwar, the gate of heaven, he meets many of them again sitting in different postures with a piece of cloth spread in front to receive alms of rice or pulses or coins which the pilgrims give.

At many places in the crowd the visitor observes a large number of people afflicted with elephantiasis in one or both legs or having abnormal enlargement of the testicles. It is a terrible and hideous deformity which is the result of filaria. One wonders how these people came to become residents of Puri which is regarded as the heaven upon earth. Puri is unhealthy because of mosquitoes, which spread filaria, and flies which cause all kinds of enteric diseases including diarrhoea and cholera. The insanitary condition of the town, its open drains and overcrowding are responsible for such maladies.

As the visitor advances along he comes to Swargadwar. It is here that the bodies of the pilgrims who die in Puri and others are brought for burning in great numbers. It is a weird place, but to the Hindus, as may be inferred from its title, it is pre-eminently sacred. *Swarga*, being the paradise of Indra, the god of the elements, the person who is cremated there attains *Swarga* or heaven, and lives there with other gods as a heavenly body. On all sides of this gate are banks and mounds of sand and close to it are many Hindu monasteries some of which are commemorative graves of rich Hindus. The ashes and charred remains of many a corpse marks the lonely sands. The corpses are, in many instances, but imperfectly consumed. The result is a frightening spectacle.

The visitor notices in Puri many pilgrim lodging houses crowded to bursting with human beings particularly at the time of important festivals. The lack of proper ventilation, drainage, water supply, and conservancy in such a place is the most powerful reason for the outbreak of cholera in this town. Puri resembles most of the time—and particularly at the time of the car festival and other festivals—a vast *sarai* crammed with human beings to suffocation and subjected to the worst insanitary conditions.

The lodging houses leave much to be desired in sanitary facilities. Noxious ooze continually trickles from these houses, in which pilgrims are herded until not an inch of space is left uncovered. The rooms are without any ventilation, neither windows nor openings in the roof, and therefore are badly lighted. The pilgrims are huddled together in these rooms, in contravention of every known law of health. Dr David B. Smith, Sanitary Commissioner for Bengal, had mentioned in 1868, an interesting case of overcrowding in a parish in England. He writes: "It is related of a poor woman in England, who resided in a room in the parish of Marylebone, in which no less than five families were located—one in each of the four corners, and the fifth in the centre of the room—that, being asked by a sanitary inspector how they could possibly exist, she replied, "Oh! Indeed, your honour, we did very well until the gentleman in the middle took in a lodger."[2]

At Puri the lodging houses are so crowded by pilgrims that not only the corners and the centre in each apartment are occupied, but the entire space including the verandahs and steps of these houses overflow with them. On one occasion, in one of the best pilgrim houses eighty persons were said to have spent the night. The place was 13′ long, 10′ 5″ wide with walls 6½′ high and a low pent roof over it. It had one entrance and no outlet for the thin polluted air. It was dark, dirty, and dismal even when quite empty. In this house cholera broke out and many people died of it. Long ago Mr Rabon, the Magistrate and Collector of Puri, reported that in a similar house the pilgrims were so crowded that it was difficult to move, yet several people were singing and one was actually cooking for the rest at a large fire which filled the room with smoke. A woman was lying ill with cholera whilst others close by her were cutting up vegetables.

During important festivals, such as the car festival, numberless men and women come together to Puri by bus, train, and also on foot from all directions. On reaching Puri these religious enthusiasts feel satisfied that they have completed the pilgrimage which to their mind is the greatest assurance to a happier state of being. Like soldiers after a battle they have fought with great endurance, the pilgrims weary from the accumulated fatigue of a long journey and many marches lie wherever they find any place. These pilgrims wear a look of austere determination to reach Puri and have a sight of Lord Jagannath. The farther they come from, and the more they are weakened by toil and hardships, the more eager and enthusiastic they are. As the visitor glances around at the crowd he notices the votaries with looks of wonder and delight, and as they approach the goal and object of their expedition they feel rewarded for all their patience, toil, fatigue, and misery.

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[2] ibid. (David, B. Smith, 1868), p. 2.

After the pilgrimage, the pilgrims have before them the return journey homewards with which only too often as in the case of the onward journey, will be associated with experiences of disease, inconveniences of weather, flooded rivers, breakdown of transport, hunger, prostration, and sometimes death. Although the pilgrims may be tired and downhearted, they yet feel that they have accomplished a religious deed which will help them in attaining salvation (*mukti*). They collect the consecrated food (*mahaprasad*) to distribute amongst friends at home and also certain holy relics of Puri such as sacred beads and canes. As they march along the grand street of Puri and as they travel in buses or trains they fill the air with devotional songs punctuated with reverent mutterings of *Haribol*. At the time of leaving Puri they give a fond and solemn look to the *chakra* (disc) of the temple fixed at its apex with pennons and steamers fluttering in the breeze from the Bay of Bengal.

In the past when there was no bus or railway connceting Puri, pilgrims had to cover the onward and return journey walking and therefore took a much longer time. But they stayed at Puri for only a day or two. Dr Smith's interview with the pilgrims during his visit to Puri in 1868 is very revealing:

> While I was passing along the crowd I observed a party of up-country men; I spoke to them and found that they were Punjabees who had just come down all the way from Hazara, some 2000 miles. They told me they had been travelling four and five months; that they were going to stay a day or two at Juggernanth (Jagannath) and then at once return to their homes. Shakespeare's words were recalled to my mind: 'A true-hearted pilgrim does not fear to measure kingdoms with his feeble-steps.'[3]

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[3] ibid., p. 65.

The visitor in his wanderings in Puri town now comes to its secular parts.

Puri is the administrative headquarters of the district (it houses the collectorate and the courts), and a holiday resort. Close to the sea stands the Government House surrounded by its other buildings; to the west of it lie the circuit house and inspection bungalows maintained by the Public Works and Forest departments, the Collector's court, the Customs office, Post office, District Board office, courts of Sub-Judge and Munsif, offices of the cooperative societies, and the Industrial Emporium. Attached to the Collectorate is the office of the Police Superintendent. The main police station is on the main street of Puri town. There are many schools and two colleges—one for co-education, and the other exclusively for girls. The general hospital is on the main street. There is also a Sanskrit College in the town.

Along the seashore are many modern hotels. One of them the South-Eastern Railway Hotel (formerly known as Bengal Nagpur Railway Hotel) is most important. Most of these are western style hotels.

The sea is shallow for about a mile from the beach, and makes bathing enjoyable. The fishermen (*nulias*) who live close to the seashore earn substantially from helping people in sea-bathing. They also fish using surf-boats.

With the train journey from Calcutta reduced to twelve hours, Puri is largely crowded by visitors during the hot months. During these months the sea breeze rarely fails to provide a pleasant atmosphere. It is very refreshing to stay at Puri during summer.

On the other hand the town which comprises the temples, monasteries, and the residential quarters of the ritual functionaries is anything but a "heaven upon earth". From the point of view of sanitation, its tanks contain the waters of death and not those of immortality; the scents blowing down the streets are other than those of fragrant flowers. The filth and stench, the swarm of religious mendicants and the nausceous objects, the poverty-stricken beggars and the deformed lepers, the horrible crowding of human beings in the filthiest lodging houses and purlieus—all these offend one's senses and dispel any illusion that Puri is a holy place and a "heaven upon earth".

The nineteenth century western visitors to Puri were of the opinion that the eclat and grandeur of the town and the temple of Jagannath are falling off with the gradual dwindling of pilgrimage to Puri. What they said was:

> Not only must the worship of such a nature as the history of all nations has taught us die out and decay, but less eagerness also is evidenced on the part of the so-called pilgrim-hunters than in former years to bring together vast crowds of devotees. The pilgrims themselves are perhaps beginning at last to discover that Shri Jeo (Jagannath) is a god whose worship entails incalculable misery rather than happiness. The history of Jagannath is a terrible story of disease and death, and as the Government is now in no way associated with the shrine, it is to be hoped that it may, as has been predicted of it, sink with its own weight.[4]

But it is also a fact that everything in Puri is astir all the time. With the improvement of road and rail communications hundreds of thousands of pilgrims from different parts of India and abroad visit Puri. According to the votaries Puri must continue from one generation to the next to be the most famous and sacred pilgrim centre and the ever-open *tirtha* of countless throngs of pilgrims. The spirit of religious fervour which is awake all the time and the devotional songs and the sounds from conches, tom-toms, bugles, cymbals, tambourines, gongs, and other musical instruments played in the temple and the monasteries at the time of worship do not suggest any diminution of its importance on the sacred map of India. The sight of the throngs of devotees who shout aloud the name of Jagannath with joy and silently go down on their knees and bow their foreheads touching the sacred dust of the main street in solemn acknowledgment of the Idol's supremacy, bear testimony to the ever-present spirit of religious fervour. According to the votaries of Vaishnavism and the apostles of other Hindu religious sects Puri must continue ever to be an important centre of Sanskritic tradition and sacred culture.

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[4] ibid., p. 61.

1. Puri—A Heaven upon Earth

A. HISTORY OF PURI AND THE JAGANNATH TEMPLE

PURI is the abode of Lord Jagannath, the God of the Universe and is the topmost pilgrim centre in India. Puri is the new name for Shri Kshetra (the apex or the best of all sacred centres of the country) or Purusottam Kshetra, the abode of the Supreme Being, that is, Lord Jagannath.

The Jagannath temple at Puri is an institution well known throughout India and outside. In this temple are installed Shri Jagannath Mahapravu, the paramount deity, his elder brother Balabhadra and their sister Subhadra. Various authentic historical records and Puranas include different accounts of the origin of the deities and their first installation at Puri. But many of them agree that before the incarnation of Lord Jagannath, at Puri, Nila-Madhaba made of Nilakantamani (emerald) was the presiding deity in Purusottam Kshetra. The account of this Image and his installation in Puri given in the palm-leaf chronicle of events (Madala Panji) runs as follows:

> In the 5th Yuga of Swayambhuba Manu on the Earth in Jambu Dwipa (India), Raja Indradyumna of the solar race was ruling at Abanti town of Malaba country. During his reign Vishnu appeared in the form of Nila-Madhaba in Purusottam Kshetra. Raja Indradyumna being a staunch devotee of Vishnu, had always cherished a desire to see Vishnu in flesh and blood, and as soon as he came to know of the presence of Vishnu at Nilakandara, a hillock in Puri near Bhubaneswar, the town of

temples in Orissa, he deputed Bidyapati, his minister's brother to gather information about the exact whereabouts of the Lord.

On receiving the orders of the Raja, Bidyapati marched towards Udra Desh (ancient name of Orissa) and came to an island called Sabara Dwipa where he met the Sabara Chief with whom he established friendship and became his guest. The Chief used to give him for food half-eaten fruits which exuded a divine smell. Being inquisitive Bidyapati enquired about these fruits and came to learn from his host that they were the offerings of the divine beings to Nila-Madhaba. Knowing this he made a request to his host to show him Nila-Madhaba. The Sabara Chief was at first hesitant to take him to Nilakandara for the purpose. But finding in his guest the genuine desire for seeing Nila-Madhaba he took him one day to Nilakandara and showed him Nila-Madhaba.

Bidyapati's mission was fulfilled and without further delay he made his return journey to Abanti and informed Raja Indradyumna all about his visit to Nilakandara and his darshan there of Nila-Madhaba. No sooner had the Raja heard this from his emissary than he started for Udra Desh to have a darshan of Nila Madhaba. The Raja took two years to reach the place and to his utter disappointment heard about the sudden disappearance of the deity from Nilakandara. But he heard there a divine voice asking him to perform Ashwamedha Yajna. After he had performed the Yajna he would find a log of wood with divine specifications on the sea-shore. The voice revealed to him that this log of wood was Nila-Madhaba.

Raja Indradyumna in great solemnity performed the Ashwamedha Yajna and after the sacrificial rituals were over the log of wood (Daru) with the symbols of Vishnu touched the shore at Puri. The Raja brought the Daru from the shore to the place of Yajna. An old and unknown carpenter appeared before the Raja and offered his services to fashion the divine images from the Daru on the condition that he should be shut up in a room with the Daru for a fixed number of days and should not be disturbed in anyway.

A few days passed by and being impatient the Raja opened the door of the room in which the carpenter was locked and found that the images remained unifinished and the carpenter had vanished. These images which the divine carpenter shaped are those of the Lord Jagannath, his elder brother Balabhadra, their sister Subhadra and Lord Jagannath's aiyudha Shri Sudarsan. The Raja started work to build a temple to instal the deities and went to heaven to invite Brahma to consecrate the temple. Brahma came in a moment (but with Brahma a moment lasts ages) and consecrated the Images, shrine, and cars in which the Images were brought to the temple. After blessing Indradyumna and his successors Brahma returned to heaven. Since then, the deities are being worshipped at Puri as the incarnation of Vishnu to the present day.

Thus it shows that the sacred institution at Puri is in existence since time beyond memory, though history says that the temple was built at the time of Raja Ananga Bhim Deb, who ruled the Kalinga kingdom in the 11th century (A.D. 1196). The palm-leaf chronicle of events (Madala Panji) makes a note of the various ruling families of Orissa and their contribution to the management of the temple. It is stated in the chronicle that after the Kesari time of rulership came Choraganga who was ruling between A.D. 1042 to A.D. 1112 and confirmed all the prior endowments of Lord Jagannath and made more endowments and assumed the title of Gajapati. He was succeeded by Ananga Bhim Dev who constructed the present temple of Lord Jagannath, endowed various properties which were utilized in the complex organization of the rituals and services introduced in the temple for the worship of the deities. Thus the temple flourished under the royal patronage of the Gajapati kings of Orissa who were the guardians of the temple tradition and instrumental in disseminating the Jagannath Cult all over the country. That is how Puri became the most famous pilgrim centre and attracted multitudes of pilgrims from every nook and corner of the country round the year to worship Lord Jagannath.

The Muslim invasion of India weakened the supreme power of the Gajapati kings and the Kalinga empire fell into decay during the time of the Muslim and Moghul rulers. The first Muslim attack on Puri was by Hosensaha of Bengal in 1509, when the Brahmins and the priests of the temple, apprehending trouble, carried away the Images and hid them in a mountain of Chilka lake. Then Kalapahara began his destructive attacks on Orissa in general and the Puri temple in particular. Suleman Ghazni, the Afghan King of Bengal, attacked Orissa in 1565 and killed Mukunda Deb (1551-68) who was the last independent king of Orissa and brought Orissa under Afghan rule.

During these depredations the Images were kept hidden in a place called Parikud in Chilka lake. But the situations improved to some extent during Moghul rule when in 1950 Raja Mansingh of Moghul Darbar visited Orissa, defeated the Afghans and appointed as the Superintendent of the Lord Jagannath Temple Raja Ram Chandra Deb of Bhoi dynasty whom the people of Orissa had declared as their king. Ram Chandra's descendents continued to manage the Temple till the eighteenth century and during this period many a time the Muslims attacked the temple and the Images were now and then removed by the priests to hideouts and places of safety.

It may be noted here that one Mussalman Deputy Governor ousted Raja Ram Chandra Deb from the management of the temple, levied a pilgrim tax and interfered with the internal affairs of the temple and brought it under State management apparently because of the enormous revenue they were realizing from the pilgrim tax. The official correspondences of that time—which are preserved in the Board of Revenue, Orissa—show that the Mussalman rulers were collecting nine lakhs of rupees per year as pilgrim tax and whenever the priests went away with the Idols in apprehension of invasion they used to induce the priests to bring back the Idols under the promise that the worship of Lord Jagannath would not be interfered with.

Muslim rule came to an end when Alivardi Khan ceded Orissa to the Marhattas who remained in power from 1756 to 1803. The Marhattas, being Hindus, encouraged the worship and got the ceremonies and festivals properly conducted and made good the deficit due to excess of expenditure over income, and these they did till the conquest of Orissa in 1803 by the British. According to Hamilton's *Hindustan* the management of the temple of Lord Jagannath and the possession of the Puri town were taken over by the British forces on the 18th September, 1803. Before this conquest, Lord Wellesley had issued the following instructions to General Campbell who was in charge of the British troops deputed to Orissa for his dealings with the priests of the Jagannath temple:

> On your arrival at Jagannath, you will employ every possible precaution to preserve the respect due to the Pagoda. . . . You will assure the Brahmins at the Pagoda that they will not be required to pay any other revenue or tribute to the British Government than that which they have been in the habit of paying to the Marhattas and that they will be protected in the exercise of their duties.[5]

This shows clearly that the English Government had respected the patrimony of Lord Jagannath no less scrupulously than is considered the practice with the general religious endowments of Orissa. For the first few years the East India Company made up annually the difference between the receipts and the expenditure of the temple. The result was that there was a deficit every year which the Company had to make good. In 1806 the Government decided to get rid of the minute supervision of the temple and by Regulation IV of 1806 they vested the superintendence of the temple in an assembly of three Brahmin pandits nominated by the Collector of Pilgrim Taxes. Considering it most unsatisfactory they abolished the assembly of the pandits and by Regulation VI of 1809 made over the management of the temple to the Raja of Khurda as its hereditary superintendent.

It may be mentioned that after Mukunda Deb, the last independent King of Orissa, the Bhoi dynasty came into existence with their capital at Khurda. Raja Ram Chandra Deb was the first king of this dynasty and Mansingh of the Moghul regime placed him at Khurda and selected him as the Superintendent of the Jagannath temple. Thus the management of the temple which was in the hands of the Marhattas for many years and of the British for a few years returned to the paramount royal family which was in intimate relationship, both mythic and ritualistic and administrative with the sacred institution of the temple of Lord Jagannath. The vesting of the charge of management of the temple in the Raja of Khurda was, however, conditional. Clause 2 of the Regulation VI of 1809 pertinent to the transfer of management from the British to the Raja of Khurda is quoted below to prove that the Raja was not granted supreme authority which the independent Rajas of Orissa enjoyed years back:

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[5] Report of the Special Officer made under "The Puri Shri Jagannath Temple Act," *The Orissa Gazette* No. 193, September 7, 1954, p. 16.

> The Raja and his successors shall hold the charge vested on them so long as they shall continue to conduct themselves with integrity, diligence and propriety. But nothing in the regulation shall be considered to preclude the Governor-General in Council from removing the present Raja or any of his successors from the superintendence of the temple on proof of misconduct.[6]

In effect, the British Government withdrew all powers of management of the temple from these Rajas who were accused of criminal offences and suspected of taking part in subversive activities. To illustrate, when the Khurda rebellion broke out in 1817 Raja Mukunda Deb, the then Raja Superintendent of the temple was suspected of having taken part in it. But the Government in their inquiry found him not guilty and acquitted him of all criminal charges against him and reinstated him in the management of the temple with orders to stay at Puri.

The British Government felt that it was against Christian ethics to raise money by a pilgrim tax and sanction it as the government grant for the management of the idolatry. Accordingly they abolished the pilgrim tax by Act X of 1840 and vested the then Raja of Puri with full authority in regard to the management of the temple and its endowments. The Government made over certain estates such as the Satais Hajari Mahal and the Ekrajat Mahal yielding an annual rental of Rs 30,000. The Raja of Berar made an assignment of revenue of Rs 23,000 towards the management of the temple. These two grants totalling to Rs. 53,000 were utilized for the temple under the direct supervision of the Raja of Puri.

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[6] ibid., p. 20.

After the British Government severed its relationship with the temple and reinstated the ruling family in the superintendence, the management went from bad to worse. Matters came to a crisis in 1877 when Dibyasingh Deb who was then the Raja of Puri and Superintendent of the temple was tried for murder, convicted, and sentenced to transportation for life. When Dibyasingh Deb was transported for life in 1878, his son Mukunda Deb was a minor. Therefore, his grandmother, Rani Suryamani Patamahadei acted as his guardian and looked after the management of the temple.

But all the while the British authorities kept in touch with the Rani to find out how she was bringing up her grandson and how effectively she was managing the temple affairs. We have reproduced below the letter of the Commissioner, Orissa Division, to the Rani indicating his concern about the upbringing of her grandson, the prospective Raja of Puri and Superintendent of the Jagannath temple:

No. 1648. R.

From C.F. Morsley Esquire C.S.
Commissioner, Orissa Division.

To Rani Suryamani Patamahadei
Rani of Pooree.

Cuttack, the 24th August 1888.

Madam,

I request to inform you that I have received from the Collector of Pooree a very unfavourable account of the general health and education of the young Raja now under your care. It seems that the boy is too much secluded and is not allowed to play games or to ride and walk without assistance, and that the life and spirit and intelligence, which are usually found in boys of his age, have not been developed in him. Considering the high position which he will hereafter occupy and the qualities which he should possess for discharging the duties of that position in a worthy manner, I cannot refrain from impressing on you the necessity of giving greater attention to his mental and physical training. Could you not engage the services of some accomplished Hindu gentleman who would teach the young Raja manly exercises and also impart to him some knowledge of useful languages and subjects ?

I shall be very glad to hear of your taking some steps for the general improvement of the young Raja.

I have the honour to be.

Madam,

C.F. MORSLEY
Commissioner

The Britith authorities were so much interested in the development of the young Raja that they prescribed a detailed programme of daily life and communicated it to his grandmother, the Rani for him to practise. The letter from the Collector of Puri to Rani Suryamani Patamahadei containing this routine of activities is quoted below:

No. 956.
Collector's Office
Pooree, the 9th September 1888.

From
D.B. Allen Esquire
Collector.
To Rani Suryamani Patamahadei of Pooree.

Madam,

I am very glad to find from your letter received yesterday that you intend making a radical alteration in the mode of the young Raja's education.

1. The great object at present is to improve his bodily health and general intelligence and so I am glad to see that he is to be under the supervision of a respectable Hindu gentleman like Baboo Ananda Chandra Mukherjia, that he is to have boys to play with and that he is to indulge in riding and other manly sports.

2. I do not think it advisable for him to have too much reading and writing to do at present and, therefore, I do not think it necessary for you to engage the services of an extra teacher.

3. The main point is that Ananda Baboo should have full control of his education and let him remain constantly with the Raja except when he is with you and the other ladies of his family. The menial servants must be ordered to obey Ananda Baboo's directions in all matters relating to the young Raja's education and he should be brought to visit me once a month so that I may see how he is getting on.

4. I have made some changes in the programme of his daily life submitted by you and as these changes will give him more of the society of his mother and yourself, I feel sure that they will prove agreeable to you.

5. 6 a.m. to 7 a.m.—riding or walking with boy companions and Ananda Baboo.

7 a.m. to 11 a.m.—rest, bathing, prayer and in the family apartment.

11 a.m. to 1 p.m.—Study (reading and writing).

1 p.m. to 3 p.m.—Lunch and games and with boys.

3 p.m. to 5 p.m.—Recreation, conversation with the Dewan, and teacher, Interview with gentlemen.

5 p.m. to 6 p.m.—Gymnastics and running about.

6 to 6.30 p.m.—Prayer.

6.30 p.m. to 7 p.m.—Rest.

7 to 7.30 p.m.—Mental exercises.

7.30 p.m.—Go to female apartment for supper which should be before 8 p.m. and bed at 9 p.m.

6. If these arrangements are carried out under Ananda Chandra Mukherjia's control, I am sure that there will be a great improvement in the young Raja's health and happiness.

I have the honour to be,

Madam,

Your most obedient servant,
D.B. ALLEN
Collector.

The objective of the concern of the British authorities about the development of the young Raja was to improve the affairs of the temple which were in the process of deterioration. In fact, the mismanagement in the administration of the temple assumed greater magnitude than previously during Raja Bira Kishore Deb (1856-72) for his negligence in discharging the duties of his position as Superintendent of the temple. Therefore the Government concerned itself with the temple with a view to improving its administration and management. The first step which the British Government took to check disturbance and maintain order within the temple and in the town at the time of large festivals was to strengthen the police force and establish more police stations. The Government sanctioned certain landed property and kept it under the charge of the Raja of Puri to defray the expenses on the police. Their decision in regard to the appointment of extra police force was noteworthy. A portion of the letter of A.S. Amand Esquire, Magistrate, Puri, to the Commissioner Orissa on the 6th November 1855 is noteworthy:

> I would propose that 100 burkundazes and two Jamadars be at once added to the Police establishment. Every burkundaze should be an up-country man and no Oriah (Oriya) or Bengallee (Bengali) eligible for an appointment in this body. An Oriah is useless save amongst Oriahs and the majority of pilgrims come from the North-West.

As noted earlier after the death of Raja Bira Kishore Deb in 1872 his widow Rani Suryamani Patamahadei remained incharge of the temple affairs because their son Dibyasingh Deb was then a minor. During her time the management of the temple got worse than before. The following remarks of the Collector of Puri refer to the management of the temple and its property by Rani Suryamani Patamahadei during the minority of the Raja, subsequently by the Raja himself (Dibyasingh Deb) and then again by the Rani after the transportation of the Raja.

> It is well to remember in dealing with the case that the family (Raja's) have the control of funds, public and private, amounting to more than Rs 80,000 a year. How much they

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> apply to the maintenance of the temple and how much they appropriate to their own use, no one knows outside their own circle. I take no account of gifts received from pilgrims.
>
> But I can inform you from enquiries made by myself through the agency of the Pargunnah Kanungo, that the affairs of all the landed property are in very great confusion so far as may be inferred from the irregular collection of rent and the heavy balances. There was much waste during the minority of Raja Dibyasingh Deb and no improvement was seen when he came of age. When the mode of management is scrutinized, the unfavourable results are readily explained. The Rani is not really managing, she exercises no control, she is entirely inaccessible and neither seen nor spoken to by her people of business. Even her native agents never hear her voice. Her wishes can only be known at third hand. She speaks only to her maids who report her commands to a set of male servants called Bissois of Cowherd Caste. Through these men the mookhtar or agent learns her pleasure, and informs the world without.[7]

To restore order the Government tried to bring back the management of the temple in its hands. To achieve this the Government instituted a suit in 1885 under Act XIV of 1882 for the purpose of declaring vacant the office of Superintendent which was nominally held by the convicted Raja and for obtaining a decree to appoint the new trustee and to settle a scheme for the development and management of the temple. The suit was hotly contested and there was a hue and cry all over Orissa that the Jagannath Cult was in danger. Finding that the public was much against the suit the Government finally entered into a compromise with the defendants.

[7] The letter No. 17-A dated, Fort William, the 26th February 1879 of H.Z. Harrison Esq., Secretary, Board of Revenue to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, RevenueDepartment.

According to the terms of the compromise Rani Suryamani Patamahadei acted for Mukunda Deb during his minority and managed the temple by employing a competent manager. But when Mukunda Deb came of age in 1897 the compromise ceased to have force and Rani Suryamani Patamahadei made over the charge of the temple to Mukunda Deb who was recognized as Raja Superintendent of the temple.

Raja Mukunda Deb took very little interest in the affairs of the temple and therefore mismanagement continued and there was considerable public disfavour against the Raja. It was a matter of great concern to the Government and after a great deal of correspondence between the then Collector of Puri and the Board of Revenue, the Government forced the Raja Superintendent to employ a government officer as Manager of the temple. Accordingly the Raja took a Deputy Magistrate as manager and till the year 1926 when Mukunda Deb died the management of the temple was in the hands of government servants of gazetted rank.

Mukund Deb had adopted Ram Chandra Deb who took charge of the temple and its properties as Raja Superintendent on the death of his father in 1926. During his time there were serious allegations about abnormal irregularities in the rituals and services giving rise to comments in the press and from platforms. The ritual functionaries neglected in their duties and in many occasions went on strike on some pretext or another. The State Government had to initiate legislative measures to check the mismanagement in the temple and bring it under its control. The Government passed Act XIV of 1952 and appointed a Special Officer under the said Act to prepare a record of rights and duties of the different classes of ritual functionaries and prepare a list of daily and periodical rituals and festivals conducted in the temple and make an inventory of movable and immovable properties of the endowment and the various sources of income.

The record of rights was a form of statutory recognition of the duties and privileges of the temple functionaries who were serving the deities informally in various capacities with a spirit of devotion and service. The duty-bound privileged functionaries created more trouble, made more demands, quarrelled among themselves, and remained absent in their turns on many occasions. The Raja Superintendent was not able to control the functionaries as he himself was subjected to criticism by them for misappropriating the temple properties and paying little attention to its affairs.

The State Government was very much concerned about it and with a view to taking up the management of the temple enacted the Orissa Act 11 of 1955 known as the Shri Jagannath Temple Act 1954. This Act became law on the 4th November 1955 and by the strength of this law the State Government made necessary preparations to take the management of the temple under its direct control. But the Raja Superintendent filed a writ petition in the High Court of Orissa challenging the validity of the Act. The High Court dismissed the petition on the 30th April 1957. In the meantime the management of the temple had changed hands and Raja Bira Kishore Deb had assumed the superintendence of the temple after the death of his father in 1954, and even though the High Court passed a decree in favour of the Government they did not bring the law into force immediately in anticipation that the management of the temple might improve under the superintendence of Raja Bira Kishore Deb. But in practice, the affairs did not appear to improve in any way and Bira Kishore Deb was discredited for his lack of interest in the temple affairs and his inability to bring the management to order.

Thus the State Government was constrained without any further delay to enforce the Act on the 27th October 1960 by constituting the Statutory Committee as provided under the Act to take charge of the administration of the temple. Bira Kishore Deb took the matter to the Supreme Court for adjudication but failed. There was a short gap of two months during which all the proceedings of the Government were stayed according to the orders of the Supreme Court. But the stay was vacated and the Committee was put into possession of the temple and its endowment on the 17th December 1960. The Raja of Puri is the Chairman of this Committee and the distinguished religious leaders, Sanskrit scholars such as the mahantas of famous monasteries, pandits of Muktimandapa and the Vice-Chancellor of Utkal University, retired Judges, and representatives of the ritual functionaries, as members of the Committee.

Notwithstanding the changes which are outlined above in the history and administrative set up of the temple from the time of the independent kings of Orissa to the present day of independent Government, Puri continues to occupy the apex position among the sacred and pilgrim centres of the country; and the great temple exists as the paramount national institution and the Lord Jagannath continues to be looked upon by the entire population of the Hindus as the Lord of Universe. The vast endowments donated to the institution and the multitudes of pilgrims who visit Puri daily and during festivities from all parts of India are testimonies of the religious force and sentiments that derive in the minds of the Hindus towards this apex. The continuity of the sacred geography and the different *tirthas* which are located here and which the pilgrims are enjoined to circumambulate during their visit to Puri are outlined in the following section.

B. SACRED GEOGRAPHY AND CENTRES OF PURI

The shape of the *Kshetra* is like that of a Conch shell (Sankha) and therefore its other name is Sankha Kshetra. Like the other two names, that is, Shri Kshetra and Purusottam Kshetra which have bearing on the Lord Jagannath, the paramount deity of Puri, Sankha Kshetra has equally ritual and symbolic significance. Of all the names by which Puri is referred to Sankha Kshetra is the most significant because Sankha is one of the Aiyudhas of Vishnu who resides in the navel or the central part of the shell in the form of Lord Jagannath. Sankha Kshetra is about five *kroshas*[8] (10 miles) in extent, of which nearly two kroshas are submerged in the sea and the remaining three *kroshas* are above water and sandy because of its origin from the sea. In the centre of the *Kshetra* lies the hillock called Nilagiri where the famous temple of the Lord Jagannath stands and within its compound many sacred institutions of importance are located.

The broad end of the Sankha Kshetra lies to the west where the temple of Lokanath, one of the eight noted Sivas of Puri, is located, and on the apical end or the cone in the east is located the temple of Nilakantha, another Siva of the eight Siva constellation. The area between the two temples is two miles in extent and is most sacred. The outer boundary of the sacred geography which is circumambulated by the pilgrims during their visit to the *Kshetra* and particularly on the fifth day of the dark half of the month of Margsisir (November-December)* starts from the temple of Lord Lokanath and passes along the bank of the River Bhergabi, touches the Siva temples of Mukteswar and Budheswar, and then along the northern compound of Indradyumna tank, one of the five *tirthas* of the sacred complex of puri, reaching the Siva temple of Bilwaswar, and the Bay of Bengal, and thereafter runs along the sea beach from the Chakratirth in the south-east to the coastal region of the Lokanath temple in the south-west.

According to the Tantric philosophy the Sankha Kshetra is made up of seven consentric folds. For the sake of convenience I have described each of these folds from the innermost fold which is the first one to the outermost fold which is the seventh one. The innermost or first fold which forms the navel of the *Kshetra* is the seat of the divine platform on which the Lord Jagannath with his elder brother Balabhadra and their sister Subhadra is installed.

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[8] *Skandha Purana* (Utkal Part), 4th stanza.

*On this day the sacred conch shell (*Mahasankha*), the Aiyudha of Lord Vishunu was born and the Sankha Kshetra, the sacred abode of Lord Purusottam is with devotion circumambulated by the devotees and pilgrims keeping the core of the *Kshetra* on their right side.

THE SECOND FOLD

The second fold which is the outer layer of the first or the innermost fold, is hexagonal (*Satakonika*) in shape and in this are located four goddesses of power (*Chattusakti*), two *tirthas*, two sacred trees, Garuda (the vehicle of Lord Vishnu) and the top of the Nilagiri hill which is convex like the back of a tortoise. The goddesses are Bimala, the power of origin, Kamala, the power of desire, Sarbamangala, the power of knowledge; and Uttarai, the power of action. The sacred trees are Kalpapadapa (the roots striking deep into the earth) and Salmalitaru (the tree that fulfils desire). The *tirthas* are Rohinikunda, and Pranitodakakunda (otherwise called Sunakuan—a well of gold).

THE THIRD FOLD

The third fold which is the outer layer of the second fold is the central part of the lotus-like structure having eight petals, each inlaid with a Siva and a goddess. The eight Sivas are Agneswar, Bateswar, Kshetrapaleswar, Chakreswar, Baikuntheswar, Pataleswar, Isaneswar, and Lokeswar. The eight goddesses are Dwarabasini, Mahabajreswari, Swanabhairabi, Bhadrakali, Bhubaneswari, Mahakali-aghora, Sitala, and Jagnyeswari. These deities are responsible for watching and guarding the first fold having the supreme Lord of the Sacred Complex.

THE FOURTH FOLD

The fourth fold which is the outer coating of the third fold forms the convex surface of the temple precinct (Mahakurma) and the inner compound wall.

THE FIFTH FOLD

The fifth fold which is the outer layer of the fourth fold is the seat of the eight Sivas and eight goddesses. The Sivas are Bisweswar, Markandeswar, Mahakaleswar, Karnameswar, Mukteswar, Ugreswar, Kapilalochana, and Agreswar. The goddesses are Bisweswari, Saptamatrika, Dakshinkali, Charchika, Alameswari, Barahi, Banadurgeswari, and Basulikeswari. These deities are also in charge of watch and ward functions of the sacred complex.

THE SIXTH FOLD

The sixth fold which is the outer layer of the fifth fold includes the noted five *tirthas* and the four original monastic seats of Ashrams. The five *tirthas* are: (1) Manikarnika (A Siva temple), (2) Swetaganga (a tank), (3) Indradyumna (the tank and the temple of Indradyumna, the mythic king of the golden age who miraculously received the logs of wood which were subsequently fashioned into images of Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra and built the temple at Puri for their reception), (4) Markanda (the tank of Markandey a hermitage of golden age and the temple of Markandeswar Siva whom the sage worshipped) and (5) Mabodadhi (the sea). The pilgrims visit these five *tirthas* while in Puri. It is the belief that the religious attainment that is obtained by going on a pilgrimage to the four important sacred centres of India—Gaya, Kasi, Hardwar, and Prayag—is the same as the corresponding visit to the five *tirthas* located in the Puri pilgrim centre.

The four Ashrams which are located in the sixth fold of Sankha Kshetra are Angira in the east, Pandu in the west, Markandey in the north, and Bhrigu in the south. These Ashrams were established in times beyond memory by the sages in four corners of the boundary of the *Kshetra*.

THE SEVENTH FOLD

The seventh fold which is the outermost zone consists of the sentries of the Sankha Kshetra and two pilgrim centres.

The institutions which the sentries guard and the pilgrim centres are listed below:

Name of the deity	*Name of the place or institution guarded*
1. Nilakantheswar (Siva)	Kshetrapala (Governor of *Kshetra*).
2. Nrisingh	The places where Yajna (Fire worship) is performed.
3. Ardhasosani (Goddess)	Night watch woman.
4. Bilweswar (Siva)	The apical region of the Sankha Kshetra.
5. Lokeswar (Siva)	The basal region of the Sankha Kshetra.
6. Kapileswar (Siva)	The watchman of the *Kshetra*.
7. Chakratirth	The pilgrim centre of unique merits.
8. Swargadwara	The passage to heaven (salvation).

Of all the sacred centres located in different parts of the country Puri is considered to be the most holy and therefore regarded as heaven upon earth. It is the abode of the Supreme Spirit (Narayan) which is installed in the great temple of Jagannath in the form of a wooden idol and by having His darsan a person becomes free or is released from the bondage and effects of Action (*karma*). Therefore, Puri is outside the jurisdiction of Yamaraja, and Yameswar, whose temple is located on the sea-shore which keeps the residents of Puri out of fear of punishment which Yamaraja inflicts on the mortals.

The fruit of worship and the religious merits which are attained by paying visits to crores of Siva temples elsewhere in India and worshipping the presiding deities therein are the same as those attained by worshipping only Yameswar of Puri.

For these reasons Puri is looked upon as the supreme pilgrim centre (Tirthraj) among all pilgrim centres in India. It is the belief that at the time of death of a person in Kasi, Lord Siva whispers in his ears the knowledge of the eternal soul (Brahmagyana) which he utters daily in his repeated cycle of births. As he practises it he proceeds in the direction of salvation. What is meant by this is that the person is reborn several times before he attains salvation. But if a person dies in Puri he is released for good from the cycle of births and gets himself merged in the body of the Almighty. He does not undergo rebirth.

The sacred complex of Puri and its hinterland comprises many institutions of socio-religious importance. They are also guardians of the Sacred Complex. The chart of the Sacred Complex shows the structural relationship between these institutions, a short narrative of the important institutions and the guardians of the sacred constellation is given in the following section.

2. The Guardians of the Sacred Complex

The structure and organization of the Sacred Tradition is preserved and maintained by certain guardians and cultural specialists. This does not mean that the sacred system is free from change. Various forces such as the changing political order and administrative setup, economic strain and social modernization try to induce change in the system. But the guardians of the tradition and various control mechanisms keep the forces of change in check and inhibit basic structural change in the tradition.

There are six important guardians of the cultural traditions and Sacred Complex of Puri:

1. The Gajapati Rajas of Orissa;
2. The ritual specialists and functionaries (*Sebaks*);
3. The ascetics and the monastic order maths;
4. The cultural centres of Puri;
5. The Sasan villages, Muktimandapa and Pandits; and
6. The minor Rajas of Feudatory States.

THE GAJAPATI RAJAS OF ORISSA

The Gajapati Rajas are the paramount guardians of the tradition. They are the founders, patrons, and saviours of the tradition.

The core of the tradition is Lord Jagannath, the paramount deity of Orissa and the Gajapati Rajas of Orissa are the foremost *Sebaks* and worshippers of the deity. They have donated vast wealth in cash and kind to the Jagannath temple for the Seba Puja of the deity. They have associated themselves intimately with all kinds of activities, secular and religious concerning the deity, and, therefore, the public considers the Gajapati Rajas the mobile form of the Lord Jagannath.

Out of the public image have grown many myths and symbols which reinforce the relationship that exists between the paramount deity and the paramount Rajas of Orissa. These mythic and ritualistic relationships are responsible for preserving the Sacred Tradition largely intact.

Because of this intimate association between them, there exist many similarities between the palace of the Gajapati Rajas (Srinahara) and the temple of Lord Jagannath (Srimandir). One of the important physical similarities is the lion's gate which is present in front of the palace and the temple. The special privilege of having the lion's gate is exclusive to Lord Jagannath and the Gajapati King of Orissa.

The significance of the Gajapati Raja of Orissa as the guardian of the sacred tradition is expressed in the analysis of the temple rituals of the Raja at the Lord Jagannath Temple. The Gajapati Raja as the foremost *Sebak* enjoys privileges of offering special services such as sweeping the three cars with a golden broom (*Chera Panhara*) at the time of the car festival. There are several other ritualistic privileges which are enjoyed exclusively by the Gajapati Raja. No one else dare claim them for fear of penalty of death or disease.

One of the significant ritual performances which is observed by the Raja every morning in the palace shows a close association between the Raja and Lord Jagannath. This ritual is called *Debarchan* (Worshipping God). After morning ablutions (*abakash*) of Lord Jagannath are over at the temple the tooth stick which is used to brush the teeth of Lord Jagannath, a little of water in which the Lord is bathed and the coconuts which are offered to the Lord at the time of the Lord's slumber at night are carried by special temple *Sebaks* to the palace. The Raja's morning ablutions are performed with the Lord's tooth stick water, etc. in exactly the same manner as in the case of the Lord. The Raja sits on a wooden seat in the room where the *Debarchan* is performed, Rajaguru (the priest of the palace) performing the rituals. In fact, the Raja's teeth are brushed in the same mock manner as in the case of Lord Jagannath. Because of his intimate ritual association with Lord Jagannath the Raja is regarded as the God-King and mobile Vishnu. This very association between Lord Jagannath and the Gajapati Raja who is the guardian of the temple organization helps considerably to preserve and maintain the Sacred Complex and the cultural traditions linked with it.

Besides being the chief ritual functionaries of the temple and the spiritual lord of their kingdom, the Gajapati Rajas were in charge of the temple estate and endowments. They used to keep an account of the income and expenditure of the temple and render them at the Jameswar Siva temple, to the Deputy of the Lord Jagannath at a special religious ceremony held for this purpose on the full moon day of the month of July-August.

The most important function of the Gajapati Rajas as guardians of the Sacred Tradition is their control of all categories of *Sebaks* and supervision of their rituals and services in the temple. After shifting their capital from Khurda to Puri in 1817 they were in a better position to give their personal attention to the administration of the temple affairs. They used to go to the temple almost daily, sit for some hours in a place called Beharan Pinda (watching spot) and watch the activities and the duties of the *Sebaks*. When the affairs of the temple were under the immediate control and management of the Gajapati Rajas they had the power of taking firm action against the *Sebaks* for any neglect of the ritual services and infringement of the temple rules. The Rajas were also entitled to punish the *Sebaks* with fines or corporal chastisement even for the slightest deviation from the prescribed hourly duties and performance of the festivities.

There are ancient books (*Pothis*, either of palm-leaves or of paper) which contain the minutest particulars regarding Lord Jagannath and the proper modes of carrying on the rites and ceremonies in the temple, and the bad omens that can possibly occur and the modes of averting them. One such written record is *Niladri Mahodaya* which serves as a scriptural reference on the rituals and services offered to the Lord Jagannath and the measures adopted in the temple on the appearance of bad omens.

The temple scribe (*Deul Karana*) and accountant of the temple is in charge of a bundle of palm-leaves (*Karmani*) in which are mentioned in detail the duties of the *Sebaks* of every description. In a separate section which follows we have given a detailed account of the ritual functionaries and the role they play in perpetuating the Sacred Complex connected with the temple of Lord Jagannath.

But at this stage two important matters concerning the performance of the ritual services, and festivals by the ritual functionaries and the control and supervision of them by the administrative staff emerge from the study of the temple organization. We have given below a short account of the supervisory arrangement which was set up by the Gajapati Rajas to meet these requirements.

The Gajapati Rajas set up proper administrative machinery to control the functionaries and ensure orderly and timely performance of the rituals and services in the temple and maintenance of the Sacred Complex.

The Gajapati Rajas appointed four officers called *Parichhas* to manage the estates and endowments of the temple and supervise the duties of the *Sebaks* for their due and regular duties and performance of the ritual services. All *Sebaks* worked in obedience to the instructions and orders of the *Deul Parichha* who was in charge of the management of the temple. He was authorized to (1) supervise the hourly rituals round the day and seasoal festivals round the year; (2) inflict suitable punishments which were specified for different categories of *Sebaks* in case of neglect in and irregular attendance to their duties; and (3) prevent summoning any of the servants of the temple to the courts of Justice for trifling disputes amongst themselves.

The *Parichhas* were authorized by the Gajapati Rajas to enquire into and settle the disputes according to ancient usage and custom of the temple, but should any of them be guilty of any offence of any enormity then the *Deul Parichha* sent them to the magistrate and appointed another person to discharge their duties during their absence.

It is customary for the *Sebaks* whose appointments are hereditary to mortgage or sell their chulis or ovens and *pantis* or places where the pots are kept after cooking. On this account frequent disputes arise between the heirs of the *Sebaks* and the mortgagees or purchasers of the chulis and *pantis*. The disputes are decided by the *Deul Parichha* and a Council of Abbots (*Sanyasis*) and Brahmin Pandits and Celibates (*Brahmacharies*) who assemble for this purpose by the order of the Rajas. Their decision is final.

Filling up the situations of *Sebaks* when one becomes vacant by death without issue was the responsibility of the Rajas. The *Deul Parichha* and the principal *Sebaks* shall fix upon a successor and after an enquiry into the person's character and capabilities the *Deul Parichha* submits the report to the Rajas for their final decision in this matter.

The *Sebaks* obey the orders of *Parichhas* and in case of disobedience they are liable to be punished. The mode of punishment is different for different categories of *Sebaks*. The former Government punished the *Sebaks* by putting peons over the offenders and depriving them of their sacred food for a day or two in order to bring the *Sebaks* back to regular performance of their respective duties.

For the offences of untimely performance of the hourly rituals round the day, Mudiratha, Daitapati, Talluchha, Bhitarachha, and Chhatisha Nijoga Naik are fined three days *Khei*. (The *Bhog* or sacred food is divided amongst the *Sebaks*, the Gajapati Raja, the *Mathadharies* and others who are connected with the ritual services in the temple. Each *Sebak* receives a portion of the sacred food being the remuneration paid for the services he renders in the temple. This portion of the sacred food is called *Khei*.) In cases of repetition of the offence, they are fined in cash not exceeding five rupees, and for offences more grievous than these they may be dismissed from their respective offices unless they can assign good and sufficient reason approved of by the *Deul Parichha* for their non-attendance.

For the similar offences the Pratihari, Suar and Panti Badu Sebaks are fined three days *Khei* and receive corporal punishment not exceeding 10 *rottons* (lashes). Such of the *Sebaks* as do not receive any *Khei* are fined in cash and receive corporal punishment not exceeding 10 rottons. They are also liable to be dismissed for offences of greater enormity. If the Akhanda Mekapa or the *Sebak* in charge of lighting the temple is negligent in his duties he is fined in cash and also receives corporal punishment. The *Parichha* is particularly careful that this service be duly and properly performed and in case of disobedience of his orders in this matter the *Sebak* of this category is liable to severe punishment.

The Gajapati Rajas had power to boycott any *Sebak* for offences committed by him of stealing consecrated food or any other temple property and of telling lies and misbehaving with other *Sebaks*. The punishment of boycott which is known as *Basanda* is of two types—Seba Basanda, prevention from performing the ritual services, and Deul Basanda, for bidding entry to the temple.

To illustrate, we furnish below a few typical cases relating to the types of punishment given by Gajapati Raja Vira Kesari Deb (A.D. 1737-1773) for offences of lying and of stealing temple property or consecrated food from the Kitchen. Of all the Gajapati Raja Vira Kesari Deb reigned for a long period of 51 years, under the suzerainty of the Marathas.

Vira Kesari was able to manage the temple ably and maintain control over its internal economy, the priests, the officers, and the servants. He conducted the affairs of the temple according to ancient and established practice.

The letters sent by Gajapati Vira Kesari Deb from his palace in Khurda to the Supervisor (*Parichha*) of the temple and other subordinate officials are reproduced below:

Letter No. 1

Sri Purusottama's Great Temple

Sri Vira Kesari Deb, 9th regnal year (Anka), Taurus, 20th day.

Acknowledge the receipt of the letter from Parichha of the Western Gate. The Ghatuara in charge of swimming the deity in water and Rama Mahapatra, the holder of the Flat Umbrella, beat a man with the handle of the umbrella and by so doing broke the handle into two pieces. Why did he use the handle of the umbrella for beating? He is to be blamed. When the Great God (Sri Thakura here refers to the King as God) will come to Puri, punishment will be meted out to the accused.

Letter No. 2

Sri Purusottama's Great Temple

Sri Vira Kesari Deb, 14th regnal year, Scorpio, 10th day.

The following temple functionaries of the category of cook (*suara*) in charge of the King's endowed share of food gifts (kotha bhoga)—Bika Mahanti, Badu Laichhana Mahasuara, and Baban Mahasuara, watchman Narana Mahasuara, while they were on duty, kept hidden 7 pieces of cakes prepared for offering to the Deity in an earthen cover (*tetauni*), and finished the middle offerings. Narana Mahasuara came and closed the doors. There was 1½ hours of day left before sunset when his son Baban Mahasuara came and opened the door and did his work. He then reported that there was a shortage of 9 cakes. This matter was placed before the Abbot Astagrasi Gosain (who looks to the performance of ritual services at the temple). The functionaries on duty said that as the cakes had been improperly cooked, so they had been thrown into the oven. Required quantities of food materials were given and they were used in preparing the consecrated food.

Narana Mahasuara, son of Paramananda Mahasuara remains boycotted (*basanda*). The watchman Dania Mahasuara is also boycotted.

Letter No. 3

Sri Purusottama's Great Temple
Sri Vira Kesari Deb, 25th regnal year, Cancer, 12th day.

This is in respect of offences committed by the temple functionaries.

The oven in the temple kitchen of Rama Mishra's monastery was dirty. All the food materials supplied for the preparation of consecrated food were stolen and Krupasindhu Panda (a functionary of the Dhopakhal category) and Madhab Panda (a functionary of the Angarua category—one who cleanses the ovens) also were guilty of negligence of duty. Collect a fine of 40 kahanas (1 kahana=1280 cowries) from each of them.

Letter No. 4

Sri Vira Kesari Deb, 34 regnal year, Aquarius, 12th day. The order of Gajapati Vira Kesari is submitted below.

The Astrologer reported the case of the theft of the head ornament. He said that Krushna Pasupalaka had stolen it.

I asked Krushna Pasupalaka to undergo an ordeal by holding a hot ball (uanda) in his hand. He held it, but it did not fall down. So I order that you give him cloth and sandal from the temple and restore him in the service of Garabadu.

[This last case which follows is not a letter from the King but an agreement reached by a group of temple functionaries of the Pharaka category regarding the distribution of largesse among coparceners and in case of violation of agreement by any cosharer as to what sort of punishment should be meted out to the transgressor.]

The Abbot, Paramahansa Astagrasi Gosain, helped a group of the temple functionaries of the Pharaka confederacy (Nijoga) to come to an agreement among themselves regarding the distribution of receipts from pilgrims. The agreement is as follows:

Letter No. 5

Vira Kesari Deb, 4th regnal year, Capricornus, 17th day.

When the pilgrims will come we all of the Pharaka confederacy will sit down and choose one according to our consent and put him as a guide in charge of the pilgrims, and whatever we earn from this we will share and enjoy. When the Khandayat comes for a view of God [*darsana*], likewise whatever Paiks [militia of the State] donate to our confederacy and whatever our patrons [jajamanas] and also Bengali Paikars donate when they come for a visit of the God; whatever we receive from the Jagamohan estate [Jagamohan is a building inside the temple where the pilgrims offer their presents] and from the Lion's Gate, and whatever presents we receive from our pilgrims; whatever income we obtain from all these sources, whether it is gain or loss, we will distribute equally among all the members now forming our confederacy. In case there is any amount to be paid we all will pay that sum in equal proportion.

Here we eleven of the Pharaka confederacy put our signatures below:

Lava Muduli, Rath Muduli, Anama Muduli, Govinda Muduli, Hadu Muduli, Nailai Muduli, Phula Muduli, Rama Muduli, Chakala Muduli, Madhab Muduli, Bihari Daraga.

Whoever among us acts against what has been stated above, shall be fined 100 kucha [1 kucha=320 tolas] of ghee and this will be donated to *kotha bhoga*. He will also be kept out of the temple. We are agreeable to all this.[9]

The administration of the Jagannath temple has changed hands, sometimes resting with the new rulers, at others resting with the Gajapati Rajas who were treated as the Superintendent of the temple. The temple and the Sacred Complex associated with it flourished under the royal patronage of the independent Gajapati Rajas of Orissa. But when the glory of the empire of the Hindu rulers was lost the sacred institutions and the cultural traditions suffered a serious set back as a result of the disastrous attacks on Puri and other cultural centres by the Muslim and Moghul rulers. But in spite of their invasion and depridation the temple organization continued almost with the same name and fame as before.

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[9] "Administration of Jagannath Temple in the 18th Century," by N. Patnaik, *Man in India*, Vol. 43 No. 3, July-September 1963.

When Orissa came under the rule of the Marhattas from 1756 to 1803 the situation in the management of the temple was improved. Being Hindus, the Marhattas encouraged the worship and got the ceremonies and festivals properly done. The same respect and honour was shown to it by the British when they took possession of Puri and the Jagannath temple in 1803. We have already quoted earlier what instructions British authorities issued to their troops in this regard and how they should treat the temple and the functionaries upon their arrival at Puri.

For the first few years the British like the Marhattas managed the temple and its estates and endowments direct and as pointed out earlier had annually made up the difference between the receipts and the expenditure of the temple.

There was a deficit every year which the Government had to make good by a tax levied on the pilgrims reporting to the temple of Jagannath in the same manner as the Marhattas did during their rule. This tax is known as Pilgrim Tax which was sanctioned by the Regulation IV of 1806 and the officer who was in charge of the collection of the tax was called the Collector of Pilgrim Tax. By the same regulation the British Government vested the superintendence of the temple in an assembly of three Pandits who were nominated by the Collector of Pilgrim Tax and appointed by the Government. The idea behind this arrangement was to get rid of the minute supervision of the affairs of the temple. The relevant sections of the Regulation IV of 1806 are quoted below:

> *Section XI*: The superintendence of the temple of Jugunnath (Jagannath) and its interior economy, the conduct and management of its affairs; and the entire control over the priests, officers and servants, attached to the idol and to the temple, shall be vested in an assembly of pandits or learned Brahmins, who on all occasions shall be guided by the recorded rules and institutions of the temple, or by long and established usage.
>
> *Section XVI:* To enable the assembly of pundits to perform the duties of their station with greater effect, they are hereby empowered to punish persons subject to their control, for any instance of neglect or misconduct, by imposing small fines upon them not exceeding one month's salary or income, or by suspending the offender from his office, if the offence shall appear to merit that punishment, provided however that, in the former case, the fines so imposed shall be reported to the Collector, in order that the amount may be deducted from the offenders' salary or wages, and that in the latter case, viz., the suspension of any officer from his employment, a report shall be made to the Collector for the decision of the Board of Revenue, or the Governor-General-in-Council, according to the nature and the circumstances of the case, on the principle of the rules contained in Regulation V 1804.

The Governor-General-in-Council passed the Regulation VI of 1809 for rescinding the previous Regulations IV and V of 1806 and for substituting rules in lieu of these enacted in the said regulations for levying duties from the pilgrims reporting to Jagannath and for the superintendence and management of the affairs of the temple. By this Regulation VI of 1809 the Government abolished the assembly of Pandits and made over the management of the temple to the Gajapati Rajas as its hereditary Superintendent. As stated earlier, they were however, not granted, supreme authority as is evident from what is stated in Clause 2 of the Regulation which we have quoted earlier.

In regard to the Pilgrim Tax the Government provided in the regulation for such items as the avenues for the admission of the pilgrims to Puri town, classification of the pilgrims liable to the tax, the rates of tax to be levied on different classes of pilgrims, and modes of preventing persons from avoiding payment of the pilgrim tax. The Government paid great attention to the collection of the pilgrim tax in order to meet by this source the deficit and reimburse the differences in the budget of the temple.

Being Christian by religion the British government felt that the money received by the Pilgrim Tax was to a certain extent the price of a State sanction to idolatry and worship of deities of Hindu religion. The public of their motherland raised objections to pecuniary grant to religious institutions of Hinduism. In order to assuage such feelings the government adopted various measures at different times to sever connections, direct or indirect with the management of the temple. The first measure adopted by the Government was to pass Act X of 1840 by which it (1) abolished the Pilgrim Tax, (2) transfered certain lands situated in Puri district to the Superintendent of the temple of Jagannath in commutation of the annual money allowance made by Government to the temple, and (3) vested the Gajapati Raja with full authority over the management of the temple and its properties and endowments. The relevant portions of the Act X of 1840 are reproduced below:

> I. Whereas it is considered proper to abolish the exaction of all taxes or fees upon pilgrims resorting to Allahabad, Gaya and Jagannath (Puri) and to transfer the charge of the affairs of the Jagannath temple exclusively to a competent Hindoo Superintendent under a full responsibility to the established courts of Justice, for the redress of any violence or wrong upon the application of any party interested.
>
> II. And it is hereby enacted, that the superintendence of the temple of Jagannath and its interior economy, the conduct, and management of its affairs, and the control over the priests, officers and servants attached to the temple, shall continue to be vested in the Raja of Khurda [Khurda, a place about 40 miles from Puri town, was the capital of Gajapati Rajas] for the time being, provided always that the said Raja

and all persons connected with the said temple shall on all occasions be guided by the recorded rules and institutions of the temple, or by ancient and established usage, so far as the same may be consistent with the provisions of this Act.

III. And it is hereby enacted that the said Raja of Khurda shall not receive or allow to be received by any person, connected with the said temple any payment other than such voluntary donations as may be freely offered, from any person, resorting to the same temple, for the performance of religious ceremonies.

IV. And it is hereby declared and enacted that the said Raja and all priests, officers and servants attached to the same temple are and shall be liable to be sued or prosecuted by any party interested, in any civil or criminal court of competent jurisdiction for any breach of trust or official misfeasance, committed in the conduct of their duties or for any extortion or illegal violence exercised upon pilgrims or others under cover of the authority conveyed by this Act.

Thus this Act forbade the temple authorities to impose restrictions of any kind upon the pilgrims for free admission into Puri town and the temples and offering prayer to the deities. At the same time, the Government scrupulously maintained the pledges on the strength of which it kept the temple under the law and order which is applicable to the public. By the force of this Act it also brought the temple and the staff connected with its ritual services and administration under the jurisdiction of the civil and criminal courts consequently seriously weakening the Raja's authority over the temple and accentuating litigation between the Raja and the *Sebaks*.

THE RITUAL SPECIALISTS AND FUNCTIONARIES

The ritual services of the temple of Lord Jagannath are well-defined, fixed and multiplex. To perform these services vast multitude of ritual functionaries *Sebaks* are appointed whose duties, rights, and liabilities are codified in a palm-leaf document called the *Karmani.* To check irregularities in the services and conflicts among the *Sebaks* the Government passed the Act XIV of 1952 [Puri Shri Jagannath Temple (Administration) Act, 1952] to prepare a Record-of-Rights consolidating the rights and duties of the *Sebaks* and the emoluments which they are entitled to. The Record-of-Rights which is the legalized document of *Karmani* help in determining the roles played by the *Sebaks* in the Sibapuja of the temple and in deciding disputes arising among them and the emoluments they are entitled to for the services rendered by them in the temple.

In former times the establishment of the temple of Lord Jagannath consisted only of a few *Sebaks* because the ritual services were of a limited number. Mr C. Grome, who was the Collector of the Puri district in 1805 has mentioned in his report to the Secretary to the Commissioner of Cuttack that there were in the past 36 types of *Sebaks* and they were in consequence called Chhatisia Nijoga. In course of time, the Gajapati Rajas, Princes, public and pilgrims, made more endowments to the temple which was necessitated by the greater elaboration of the ritual services and worship of the deities in the temple. To perform them were needed a greater number of *Sebaks* and a division of labour among them. Mr Grome stated in his report inter alia, "From a period of at least 200 years others have been added to these original 36 *Sebaks* and the number now belonging to the temple amounts to 250."[10] Shri L Panda has mentioned in his report, "There are more than 140 kinds of *Sebaks* and besides, these *Sebaks*, here are various other institutions and individuals connected with the Seba Puja."[11] In fact the Record-of-Rights which he prepared includes 119 categories of *Sebaks*.

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[10] Report of C. Grome, Collector, Puri to T. Fortescue Esq., Secretary to the Commissioner for the affairs of the Province of Cuttack, dated 10th June 1805, para. 9.

[11] "Report on the Puri Shri Jagannath Temple Act (Act XIV of 1952)" by Shri L. Panda, Special Officer, *the Orissa Gazette*, Cuttack, No. 163, September 7, 1954, p. 45.

To the public the *Sebaks* are known as *pandas*, a generic term used for the constellation of the *Sebaks*. But in reality the *pandas* are those who are concerned with the pilgrims. They are called Jatri Panda (Pilgrim Panda) and are considered to be *tirthguru*. The important duty of the *pandas* is to visit different parts of India, preach the philosophy and doctrine of Jagannath cult among the Hindus, collect pilgrims and escort them to Puri. They are also responsible for providing lodging and boarding to them in *dharmasalas* at Puri and arrange a *darsan* of Lord Jagannath for them and a visit to different sacred centres and *tirthas* located in the town and in its vicinity.

In the past the pilgrims were delivered over to the *pandas* and their agents at various check-posts at the entrance gates on the routes leading to Puri. The *pandas* maintained a list of the pilgrims who were in their charge and whom they escorted to Puri on pilgrimage. This arrangement was necessary for the collection of pilgrim tax from them. Any *panda* who tried to hide any pilgrim with the intention of evading payment of the pilgrim tax was severely punished. The Collector of Tax at Jagannath used to issue to the pilgrims licence of access to the temple and perform the customary ceremonies under the charge of their respective *pandas*. At the expiration of the period mentioned in the licence the *pandas* were responsible to collect these licences from the pilgrims under their charge and return them to the Collector of Tax, in default where of the *pandas* or their agents were subject to such fine as was considered proper in the circumstances of the case.

There were two reasons for making the pilgrims over to the *pandas*: first, to prevent unnecessary delays at the *chowkies* or passes and second, to prevent people of low caste going into the temple since *pandas* were answerable for offences of this nature.

When there was no railway and vehicular canveyance to Puri the *pandas* used to go on foot to different parts of India to meet those of their patrons (*Jajamans*) who had visited Puri once or twice on pilgrimage and establish contacts with new patrons and indoctrinate them with the Jagannath *Dharma*. The *pandas* we may say are solely responsible for making Puri known to the people all over India and spreading the Jagannath *Dharma* far and wide. When they make their journey they carry with them sufficient quantities of consecrated food for distributing among the devotees of Lord Jagannath. The faith and devotion to Lord Jagannath are so firm and deep-seated that as soon as a man of any village in a far-off place meets someone coming from Puri town he is overwhelmed in *Bhakti* towards Lord Jagannath and feels himself as if he were in the pilgrim centre and lies down prostrate on the ground.

I have witnessed this in a gardener of the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Simla. While I was once taking a stroll in the apple garden of the Institute I came across the gardener who kept watch on the trees. We sat down together under an apple tree to chat. When he came to know that I was from Puri he solemnly folded his hands and bent down to touch the ground with his head and then stretch himself with his face downward. I was curious to find out why he had prostrated himself. He replied, "Seeing you or any man from Jagannath Puri is as sacred as seeing the Lord Himself. Many a time the Tirthagurus or Pandas have come to my village and many people have accompanied them to Puri on pilgrimage. But I have not yet had the chance to make a trip to the sacred centre. Nor do I hope to do it ever in my lifetime. Therefore, seeing you or a man of Jagannath *dham* I feel that I have attained some religious virtue and merit."

During their visit to different parts of the country the *pandas* receive grants of land and other properties from the well-to-do devotees for the express purposes of defraying the established expenses of the temple. The lands granted to Lord Jagannath for this purpose are known as Amruta Manohi which means that the produce from such lands is used for the purpose of offering *Bhog* independent of Kottabhog, that is, what is permanently allowed by the Government. Thousands of acres of Amruta Manohi land granted as *khairata* by numberless devotees belonging to different parts of the country are under the charge of the *pandas* and heads of the monasteries situated in Puri. They furnish the temple with articles and appropriate the proceeds of the lands for the purposes for which they were assigned and in keeping with the intention of the donors. Essentially the *pandas* have established in perpetuity the sacred link and a network of relationship between the public and the Sacred Complex.

As indicated earlier there is a vast multitude of *Sebaks* attending to the ritual services in the temple. One thing which strikes us is that even though the *Sebaks* belong to different castes, high and low, they are all considered equal in the eyes of Lord Jagannath and they are all his *Sebaks*. As a matter of fact no hierarchy is maintained among them as the duties and functions of all the *Sebaks* are equally important and all the *Sebaks* are interdependent and tied up together by a network of ritual and social relationships. Different functionaries perform different functions and by the very nature of their duties and rights some have control over others. But being founders of the temple and supreme guardians of the sacred tradition the Gajapati Rajas are not only the chief administrators and superintendents of the temple but also the foremost *Sebaks* of Lord Jagannath. Being the head of the temple they are the controlling authority of the *Sebaks* and have the power to punish them for any negligence in their ritual services by putting peons over the offenders and depriving them of their sacred food (*Khei*) and also dismissing them from their service. As superintendents they are in entire charge of the temple, and its internal management, its police and sanitary arrangements. They exercise the powers of issuing orders in matters of succession to any *seba* and sanction new appointments to the temple services. They are in charge of all immovable properties and the Ratna Bhandar of Lord Jagannath which consists of most valuable jewellery, precious stones and gold ornaments. They are also in charge of all the temple funds and are liable as trustees to keep full accounts of the yearly income and expenditure of Lord Jagannath and His property.

Quite apart from this capacity as superintendent and trustee, the Gajapati Rajas as successors to the independent Kings of Orissa, have got certain important *Sebas* in the temple and also enjoy unique privileges for themselves and their family members including daily *Kheis* of consecrated food.

They are described in the *Madala Panji* as the Adya Sebak or the foremost *Sebak* with the duty of performing the ritual sweeping of the three cars with the golden broomstick during the car festival. They are entitled to a certain amount of consecrated food (*Tat*) on special occasions, and there are *Sebaks* specially deputed to carry this *Tat* to their palace accompanied by an elaborate ceremony. They are respected by the people as mobile Vishnu (Chalanti Vishnu) because whenever they go to the temple they are served in a manner next only to Jagannath.

A list of other important *Sebaks* is given below indicating in brief the important duties and rituals which they perform in the temple:

1. *Mudirasta*: He officiates for the Raja in Cherapahara and other functions in case the Raja is prevented from performing them for one reason or another.

2. *Chhatisha Nijoga Nayak Patjoshi Mahapatra and Bhandar Nayak*: He had vast powers and functions in the past but many of them are at present not in vogue. He comes from the Pasupalak class and till 1930 had the key of the *Bhandar*. He is to execute all orders of the Temple authorities and to see that all the *Sebaks* do their duty properly. He also performs the Sadi Bandha ceremony.

3. *Bhitarch Mahapatra*: He is the first man to go for the

Dwarfita (to open the door) ceremony and to examine the seals and has to perform the Sadi Bandha ceremony and check the purity of the Bhog offered.

4. *Talich Mahapatra*: He seals doors at night pahur and controls and checks the purity of the kitchen.

5. *Bhandar Mekap*: In charge of Bahar Bhandar containing all the jewellery required for the daily use of the deities.

6. *Parichhas*: Parichhas were at one time managing the Temple. Their work has now been reduced to holding a gold cane at the Sakal Dhup Patuar (offering made in the morning) and during certain festivals.

7. *Padhiaris*, who guard the deities, go to call for Bhogs and are responsible for the safety of the pilgrims.

8. *Gochikars*: These belong to the Padhiari class and watch the door called the Jay-Bijaya Dwar.

9. *Binakar*: He Plays the *bina* (lute) to the deities before he goes to sleep.

10. *Bhitar Gayeni* sings songs at the time of Pahur (slumber) and at other festivals.

11. *Samprada Nijog*, i.e., dancing girls who dance at the time of the Patuar (procession).

12. *Madeli* plays the Madal (drum) at the time of the Patuar.

13. *Sankhua* plays the *sankh* (conch) with the *Baijayantries* (musicians).

14. *Kahalia*: Blows Bije Kahali (bugle).

15. *Ghantua* and *Ghant Nijog* work with bells daily and on festivals.

16. *Amonia Chatar*: The *chatar* (an umbrella), the *taras* (the flat umbrella), the *kalakanti* (a kind of umbrella)—*sebaks* for carrying umbrellas at festivals, etc.

17. *Gitagovinda Sebak*—He recites the *Gitagovinda* before the Lord at Chandan Lagi (anointment of sandal).

18. *Chakra Dihuri* and *Chamu Dihuri* carry *masals* (torches) at festivals, etc.

19. *The Sinharis* or *Pasupalaks* dress the Lords and put

flowers on him at all times and do the Abakash Puja (morning rituals).

20. *Suar Badus* (*Bhog Saita Suar Badu, Behera Suar Badu*): These wash the Pokharia (the place in front of the lion's platform where food is offered) several times.

21. *Patri Badu*: supplies the *Puja Upakarans* (ingredients of worship) throughout the day.

22. *Gara Badu*: He serves the gods by supplying water at the time of Pujas and other Nitis.

23. *Sudha Suara* and *Ansar Sudha Suara* make preparations for Puja.

24. *Muduli*: The incharge of Puja utensils and other daily *Puja Upakarans* and supplies to *Mekaps*.

25. *Hadap Nayak*, *Bidia Jognia* and *Tambul Sebak* serve to prepare and carry betel leaves to the Lords.

26. *Ghatuaris* prepare and serve *Ainla* (trifala), *Chandan* (sandal) and *Mahadipa* (great lamp) for the daily nitis and for the Parbajatra Nitis.

27. *Tulasia* supplies tulsi leaves daily.

28. *Dayanamalis* supplies daily scented flowers.

29. *Mahabhoi* supplies curd and other milk products.

30. *Pani-apat* supplies water required in the Temple throughout the day.

31. *Balita Sebak* supplies *Arati Balita* (the wick used for ceremonial lamp).

32. *Kumbhar Bishois* supply *Handi* and *Kudua* (earthen pots) and other pottery required daily.

33. *Daudia* supplies rope to draw water from the Shri Bimala well.

34. *Malchul Sebak* supplies *Chul* (tuft of flower), etc., for some festivals.

35. *Mulia Suansia* supplies *Kath Pidha* (fuel), etc.

36. *Joganias* for Koth Bhog, Parbajatra, Ballav and Bahar Deuli to carry articles and Ballav (sweetmeat) and supply at required places.

37. *Biman Badus* carry all Bije Bimans (a kind of carriage).

38. *Chap Behera* and *Dalais* Work to prepare *Chaps* (the float).

39. *Rath Bhois* work and supply lobourers for construction of Cars.

40. *Kalabethias* drag the Cars.

41. *Karatias* or *Sawers* work on construction of the Cars.

42. *Tamra Bishoi* works as a coppersmith during the Car festivals.

43. *Chitrakars* and *Rupkars* colour and prepare the Pratimas (images) for decoration of the Cars.

44. *Ojha Maharana* works as blacksmith.

45. *Rath Dahuk* sings on the Cars.

46. *Banua* supplies fireworks when required.

47. *Chaka Apsar Sebak* keeps charge from tailors.

48. *Mandni* ties *Chandua* (canopy) when required.

49. *Koth Suansia* work as labourers to prepare huts, *chamundias* (leafy shed), etc. at festivals.

50. *Suna Goswami* draws water from Suna Kuan (well) on Snan Purnima (bathing ceremony).

51. *Darjis* stitch clothes, Chaka Apsar (pillows) etc.

52. *Patras* prepare silk ropes, etc.

53. *Badhais* or carpenters work on Cars and *Chaps*.

54. *Panikund Sebak*, *Lugadhua* and *Mahasethi* work to wash the deities' clothes.

55. *Bania* prepares and repairs ornaments.

56. *Mukha Pakhala* makes tooth-sticks for the deities.

57. *Khatuli Sebak* puts *Khatuli* for Abakash Puja.

58. *Darpania* supplies *Darpana* and also cleans the deities' utensils.

59. *Baidya* or doctor gives medicine at Ambasara to the Lord.

60. *Chunras* serve Garud.

61. *Lenka* works to call the *Sebaks*.

62. *Pradhani* works to call the *pandas* and has other duties. He distributes *Kheis* at the Mukti Mandap.

63. *Paiks*, with their heads Dolei and Dalbeheras, stay

throughout the day and night and work according to the orders of the temple authorities.

64. *Temple Police* guard the Temple.

65. *The Mahasuaras* are the first to take the *Chheka* (food arranged for the offering) to the Panti (the place where the food is offered).

66. *Suars* are of various kinds known by different names according to the nature of duties; those who cook and prepare Bhog like Badu Suar, Pitha Suar, Tuna Suar, Tha i Suar, Amalu Suar, Bindua, Pagua, Amalu Toli, Tola Badu, and Tola Bati (who shows light).

67. *Rosh Amin* and *Rosh Paika* watch and supervise the kitchen.

68. *Handi Jogania* Supplies pots for Bhogs.

69. *Bahar Deuli Suars* cook in Shri Laxmi's *Rosh.*

70. *Rosh Koth Bhog Pania* supplies water to the kitchen,

71. *Paniki Pata* cuts and dresses vegetables.

72. *Rosh Nikap* prepares Gandhan ingredients like ginger and distributes ghee to some *Sebaks*.

73. *Chaul Bacha* cleans the rice to be cooked.

74. *Chunamunda Samartha*, *Birimung Samartha* and *Biribuha Samartha* are those who supply rice, flour, and ground black gram.

75. *Panti Badus* carry Chhecks.

76. *Biduas* make Muthmal or Chhecks ready.

77. *Dho-Pakhalia*, *Gobar-Pania*, *Angarua* and *Rabadia* wash and clean the kitchen and *chulis* (ovens) and supply water for the purpose.

78. *Sabut Nijog* have *Seba* on Amabasya days at Swargadwar.

79. *Bentbindha Paik* has *Seba* on festive Nitis.

80. *Mudra* puts Mudra at the time the seal is to be affixed.

Besides, the *Maths* or monastic houses in the town have each some ritual functions or the other to do in the temple.

NIJOGA

Adherence to the rules concerning the Sebapuja in the temple and turn of service, and the life styles of the Sebak communities is ensured by two organizations. At the family level the social surrounding and the community living provide conditions necessary for following the special style of life and the rules of ritual service. Outside the social organization and environment is the Nijoga which enforce strict adherence to such life styles, and to the turns of services and Sebapuja in the temple.

Nijoga is a kind of association which is organized among each category of *Sebaks*. The word Nijoga is derived from *nijucta* which means appointed in or putting to work or service. The main objective of this association is to get done all the traditional ritual and service in the right manner. To explain to its members the aesthetic specialities of the Jagannath Cult and the timely performance of the ritual services is its main function.

Each *Sebak* group has its own Nijoga. Of the 36 Nijogas those of Suara (cook) and Daita Nijogas are basic, and leaving aside the Pratihari (watch and ward) and Suara Nijogas the remaining 34 Nijogas taken together are called Bhitar Sebayat Nijoga. Each Nijoga has four hereditary chiefs who are called Naiks. The members of these are divided into two categories: the active members performing the rituals and services in the temple are called Bhaipua, the remaining male members of the *Sebak* group who have the right to serve in the temple and would be Bhaipuas in course of time when qualified, are called Bhagari.

Being basic Sebak Nijogas, the male members of Suara and Daita Sebaks have a birthright to serve in the temple when they come of age and have requisite knowledge of the rituals and services. They need no formal order from the temple authorities including the Gajapati Raja of Puri. The fact of taking charge of the rituals and services and performing them timely and properly confers on them the rights which the Bhaipuas enjoy in the temple organization. The Nijogas to which they belong accord permission to receive their respective *Khei* from the date of their joining the duties in the temple.

In the case of Puja Panda, Pasupalaka, and Chhamukhuntia, permission from the Raja is required to become Bhagari of their respective Nijogas. But those who are connected with the Nijogas other than their own and are Bhagari members of more than one Nijoga they are recognized as Bhaipuas of the concerned Nijogas. Besides, there are others who are called or appointed Bhagaris. In their case though they have hereditary right to serve in the temple, permission is required not only from the Nijogas but also from the Raja and the temple authorities in order to be recognized as Bhagari in the field of temple services.

When a person is ready to take up service in the temple he applies to the Raja for permission to work in the temple and be recognized as a *Sebak* of the temple. On the receipt of the application the Raja refers his case to the concerned Nijoga, Deul and Taddau Karanas, and Patajoshi Mahapatra who is the Naik of the 36 Nijogas. Thereafter, these agencies and authorities make an inquiry about the applicant and submit their reports to the Raja who then passes orders for performing Sadi-Bandha (tying round the head a piece of silken or cotton cloth in recognition of his appointment in the services of the temple) and thereafter putting him to the temple service. In some cases where the Nijoga or other authorities have not given the right decision the Raja may set aside their decision and give a verdict which he considers proper. In certain cases the aggrieved party may take shelter in the proper court of law for justice and the temple authorities are bound to accept the decisions of the court.

As indicated above, the main function of the Nijoga is to have all traditional rituals performed and services of the Lord

Jagannath attended to in the proper manner. The question that may be asked here is that when a *sebak* is appointed as his birthright to serve in the temple or when his services are sanctioned by the authorities dictated by tradition what is the need for a Nijoga. A *sebak* who does his duties in the temple at least for nine hours daily gets *Khei* which is nominal—its worth varying from Rs. 1.50 to Rs. 5.00. The payment for the labour is so meagre that in many cases the *Sebaks* arrange a proxy for doing the allotted services in the temple on their behalf, maintaining the turns of service as mentioned in the Beddapatra. The ordained *Sebaks* on the other hand get themselves employed in other jobs of substantial economic return. Compared with the income derived from the temple service in the form of consecrated food the input of labour in the temple service is so great that unless there is faith in the God and devotion to his service, it is likely that there may be irregularity and disorder in the performance of the rituals and services. To rely exclusively on the individual for the realisation of the ritual and aesthetic importance of the temple services and their timely performance in such circumstances was not possible. For example, a *Sebak* might be oriented towards Saivism. While performing certain rituals connected with the birth of Krishna he is sure to make a difference between Vaishnavism and Saivism to which he is inclined mentally though professionally he is performing a Vaishnavite ritual. The ritual conflict that arises in his mind may in all probability disturb his performance and create difficulties in maintaining order in the temple rituals and services. Under these circumstances it is necessary to have effective institutional infrastructures which serve and protect temple tradition and indoctrinate the *Sebaks* in the ideology of the Jagannath cult, and the aesthetic importance of performing the temple rituals and timely services without any distractions. The Nijoga is a great help in achieving this objective. It embodies the group effort which is more effective than any individual effort in performing the rituals and services in the proper manner.

The Nijoga has another important role to play. It maintains discipline in temple service with the help of a roster or turn of worship called *Beddapatra*. This book contains the names of the *Sebaks* and the day on which they have to perform their duties in the temple. Each *Sebak* community has its own *Beddapatra* which is maintained by the Nijoga to which it belongs. But the Deul Karana, who is the temple scribe maintaining all accounts and a chronicle of the events cancerning temple affairs, and the Patajoshi Mahapatra, who is the chief of all Sebak Nijogas, are custodians of all *Beddapatras* of all *Sebak* communities. They keep these books up-to-date by making entries of the names of the *Sebaks* who acquired the right to temple service by succession, or by transfer or by special settlement made with the Raja in certain circumstances.

Temple service is a kind of property of the *Sebaks*. They can sell or mortgage a part or the whole of it and can transfer it as a gift. But the transactions are always confined to their community and in all cases permission is obtained from the Raja, who informs the Deul Karana, Patajoshi Mahapatra and the concerned Nijogas for correction of the records of *Beddapatra*. In the case of the death of a *sebak* without a heir to succeed after him, his service becomes what is called *Niranshi* and the Raja becomes the owner of such *Niranshi* service. He may settle any *Sebak* on this service and inform the name of the *Sebak* to the Deul Karana, Patajoshi Mahapatra and the concerned Nijoga for making an entry of his name in the *Beddapatra*. The *Sebak* who is appointed in the *Niranshi* service makes some payment to the Raja who uses it as he chooses. This shows that the Raja has supreme power over the *Sebaks*, and temple affairs and property. The Nijoga maintains a record of the amount of *Khei* which is to be paid to each *Sebak* in lieu of his service in the temple. It collects a portion of the *Khei* of different *Sebaks* and the sale proceeds of these contributions are deposited in the community fund of the Nijoga. Sometimes, the Nijoga gets done through other Bhaipuas the services of the *Sebaks* who are disabled and cannot perform their respective services. In such cases a portion of the *Khei* due to these *Sebaks* is sold in the public and the sale proceeds become an income of the Nijoga which are deposited in its community fund. If a *Sebak* neglects his services and does something which amounts to disorder in the temple services, as a punishment for his abnormal behaviour the concerned Nijoga attaches (*krokha*) to his *Khei* and appropriates the sale proceeds of it to the community fund. The circumstances under which the *Khei* is attached are *Niranshi* suffering from a contagious disease like leprosy, tuberculosis, drunkenness committing unlawful acts, falling into bad habits and quarrelling with other *Sebaks* in connection with the turn of worship. The Nijoga enjoys full power to attach the *Khei* of the concerned *Sebak* and report the matter to the Raja for further action against him.

Besides the *Khei* the *Sebaks* earn from other sources as listed below:

1. *Sriangalagi*: When the pilgrims are allowed to go near the platform on which the deities are seated they throw coins towards the deities. The coins which touch the body of the deities and fall on the platform are taken by the Pasupalaka Sebaks.

2. *Pindika Ani*: Three receptacles (*jhari*) are kept on the platform, one in front of each deity and the pilgrims desirous of donating anything to the deities put the same in these containers. At the time of great rush, and sometimes owing to the manipulation of the *Sebaks* the pilgrims fail to insert the coins or anything that they wish to donate (*Pindika*) in the vessels and hurriedly place them in the vicinity of the three vessels or throw them on the platform. The Khuntia and Mekapa Sebaks have a right over these coins or those

which fall around or between the vessels. The coins inside the receptacles are government property (*Pindika Ani*) and it is a substantial source of income of the temple estate. The Garabadu Sebaks are entitled to one-sixteenth of a rupee of what the Khuntias and Mekapas get from this source. This is called *olipaisa* of *Garabadus*.

3. *Gada*: In certain festivities the *Sebaks* get clothes (*Kenduli*) of Tigiria state for their service on such occasions.

4. *Puraskar Khei*: On special occasions like the solar eclipse it is necessary to perform all the services in haste and put the deities to bed before the eclipse starts. The *sebaks* receive special *Khei* as a reward for their timely and prompt performance of the duties.

5. *Garuda Khumba Dipa Dakshina*: The pilgrims and visitors offer a lamp at the pillar called Garuda Khumba and whatever they want to donate at this sport is the Chunara Sebak's right to receive.

In all such cases the respective Nijogas receive the donations and distribute them among the *Sebaks* properly.

The Nijogas have not only a controlling position in respect of distribution among the *Sebaks* of *Khei* and other kinds of payments but they have also supervisory capacity in matters relating to testing the knowledge of the would be *Sebaks* in the techniques of worship and performance of the service in the temple. The Naik of the Nijogas tests the candidates and recommends them to the Raja for service in the temple. How effectively they perform their respective rituals and services is assessed from actual observation.

MONASTERY (MATH)

No account of the Sri Kshetra can be complete without some account of the monasteries or monastic houses called Maths. These maths were founded in Puri by the religious teachers and preachers with the object of preaching for their respective religious sects, and spreading their particular philosophical doctrines, giving religious instructions to the disciples and generally encouraging a religious life, perpetuating the Guru-Chela (spiritual guide-disciple) tradition and institutionalizing it by establishing religious centres and procedures of prayer and worship—dedicating their ritual services to Lord Jagannath and safeguarding the Jagannath cult and cultural institutions, and last but not least arranging feeding travellers, beggars, and ascetics.

The monasteries are intimately associated with the temple of Lord Jagannath in performing various religious duties such as in the case of the Uttarparswa Math, supplying special offerings of food, or as in the case of the Jagannath Ballava, providing flowers for the decoration of the deities or as in the case of the Jhanjapita Math, waking up the deities in the morning by playing on musical instruments, or sweeping and cleaning the temple precincts as in the case of Jhadu Math. In emergencies the temple authorities consult the Mahants of the Maths and according to their advice solve many ritual problems. To illustrate, when a large piece of stone fell down from the ceiling of the temple, the authorities convened a meeting of the Mahants, discussed with them regarding the manner in which the temple could be repaired. On certain occasions the Government appoints the Mahanta of Emar Math, the richest of Puri, as receiver of the temple properties and supervisor of the rituals and services.

At one time there were as many as 752 Maths in Puri town. They represented various sects such a Vaishnavism (Sri Sampradaya or Ramanuja, Ramanandi, Kabir Panthi, Khaki, Mulak Dasi, Vallabhachari, Madhwachari, Nimarka, Gaudiya, Radha Vallabhi, Gadwa Madhawa, etc.), Saivism (Dandi, Dasnami, Avaduta, Naga), Sakta (Dakshina, Vani, etc.) and miscellaneous sects of Nanak, Satanami and Sunyavadi types. This shows that some Maths follow monism, some dualism, and others special forms of dualism. In philosophy, and ideology, in the manner of worship and in their relationship with the temple of Lord Jagannath the Maths present a diversity but one thing which is common to all is their peaceful co-existence in Puri town and their ritual dedication and sub-ordination to the Jagannath Cult. Essentially the monasteries in their interrelatedness are integrated to the core of the sacred complex as one of its important aspects.

The heads of these monasteries, who are called by various titles such as Mahanta, Adhikari, etc., are not only spiritual guides of the public but also scriptural advisors to the Gajapati Kings of Orissa and other administrative staff of the temple. Having vast landed properties in their possession some Maths are noted for their wealth. Although the latter wield more economic power and influence than other monasteries of moderate or low means, the public regard all of them as equal in the ritual sphere. Most of the Maths of Vaishnava sect possess large landed estates (Amrut Manohi) which were donated by their followers with the intention that the proceeds thereof should be spent in offering food (*Bhog*) to Lord Jagannath and the consecrated food (*Mahaprasad*) thus obtained should be distributed among the pilgrims, beggars, and ascetics. In brief the monastic houses act as strong connecting links between the public and the temple of Lord Jagannath, and perpetuate the sacred tradition of the pilgrim centre.

3. The Cultural Centres and Sahi Organization

THE Gajapati Rajas of Orissa established a kind of village organization with suitable cultural institutions through which the sacred traditions of Puri were maintained. We have presented below a short account of such an organization which exists in each of the principal wards of Puri town and the typical socio-religious institutions which were designed by the Gajapati Rajas to maintain the cultural traditions of Puri town.

The population of Puri town was in the past composed mostly of the ritual functionaries and officers attached to the various departments dependent on the temple of Lord Jagannath. Besides these, there were the inmates of the monasteries which chiefly cluster round the temple. As road communications developed and the facilities of vehicular traffic, the population of Puri increased enormously. For example, when Puri was not connected by railways nearly 60 years back, it had roughly a few thousands of people. But after the roads were made *pucca* and the rail link was established the population increased by several thousands.[12] Many businessmen opened shops of grocery, stationery, and other things. Many hotels sprang up on the seashore, and new offices made their appearance in various parts of Puri town which was expanded in the northerly and easterly directions to accommodate the increased population.

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[12] The resident population of Puri town in 1901 was 32,000 and in 1961 was 60,815.

In the past the town had only seven divisions called Sahi which spread fan-like in all directions from the temple. But with the increase in the population many minor lanes branched off from the main streets. But for all intents and purposes they are parts of the main Sahis. The main Sahis are as follows:

1. Harachandi Sahi,
2. Gourbada Sahi.
3. Bali Sahi,
4. Matimandapa Sahi,
5. Dolamandapa Sahi,
6. Kundeibenta Sahi, and
7. Markandeswar Sahi.

Each Sahi has four headmen called Naiks, who are in charge of the socio-cultural institutions of the Sahi. Of all the institutions the recreation club is the most important. It is locally called the *Akhada* and consists of 16 members who assist the Sahi Naiks in their work. The main functions of the *Akhada* is to provide educational facilities to the children and, in general, look after the health and happiness of the people of the Sahi. At the *Akhadaghar* the interested persons learn music and dancing and stage plays during festivities. The members of the *Akhada* hold discussions on cultural affairs and on problems concerning the Sahi in general. The inhabitants of the Sahi practise physical exercise at the *Akhadaghar* and there are instructors to train them in various gymnastic performances.

The *Akhadas* of Puri town were most intimately connected with the ritual service of the Jagannath temple and of the palace. At the time of the *candan* festival (the festival in which sandal paste is spread over the body of the deity) the dancing boys of each *Akhada* show their performances in front of the deputy of Lord Jagannath. Dramatic fiestas and processions are organized by the *Akhadas* at the time of the swing festival and Krishna's birth ceremony. On these occasions various types of musical and dancing performances such as the Odisi dance and music which are typical of Orissa are held in the midst of the procession. Many types of cultural shows and dances such as Sanyasi, Sattara, Medda, Naga, Pala, Kela Keiuni which are typical folk dances of Orissa are dramatized during these festivities. Gymnastic performances and wrestling matches and displays of various styles of self-defence are also included in the cultural shows.

Whenever the Gajapati Rajas of Puri confer any title on a person of Puri town or grant him certain privileges they inform the Sahi Naiks so that the Naiks do not prevent him from using his privileges. We quote below a letter from Raja Dibyasingh Deb addressed to the Sahi Naiks and other concerned persons on this matter:

> The letter is addressed to the Naiks of the seven Sahis of Shri Purusottam (Puri) and to the Sardar of the town.
>
> It is ordered on the 5th Anka Makar the 18th day that the son of the Pasupalaka [a category of *Sebak* of the temple in charge of adorning the deities with flowers], Madhuri Kar of Harachandi Sahi is herewith granted to use Trasa [flat umbrella], whisk, fan with peacock feathers [Mayurajhula] in the marriage procession accompanying the bridegroom. He is permitted to organize such processions with these paraphernalia on the occasion of marriage and during the sacred thread ceremony. No one should prevent him from doing so.

The directives given by the Gajapati Rajas as regards the duties of the Sahi Naiks are reproduced below from a letter addressed by Raja Dibyasingh Deb to the Sahi Naiks.

> The Sahi Naiks remain in charge of the ritual functionaries, peasants, businessmen and shopkeepers resident of their respective Sahis. They all should work in cooperation with one another. They should comply promptly to the orders and directives of the Raja of Puri. The Naiks are authorized to receive annual fees from the ritual functionaries. They are also entitled to collect annual dues from the peasants. They are authorized to get their fees at the rate of one anna per rupee at the

time of the sale transaction of landed property among the residents of their respective Sahis.

The Naiks are required to establish recreation centres in their respective Sahis and employ music and dancing teachers and keep all kinds of musical instruments in such centres. They should encourage the Brahmin boys to learn music and dancing in such centres. They should also provide facilities to them for training in drama and theatrical performances. They should put on dramas and musical performances at the time of various festivities held in the temple and on special occasions such as the birth ceremony of Krishna, Rama, and other epic heroes. Other jobs which they are required to do are displays of fireworks during festive occasions. They are also expected to observe birth ceremonies of all religious heroes like Rama, Krishna, and others in pomp and pageantry.

Whenever Lord Jagannath is brought to the palace of the Gajapati Raja of Puri, they should solemnize this occasion by performing a dance and theatrical shows at the palace and accompany the deity during the return journey to the temple. They should provide oil for lighting lamps used in the festivals observed at the palace and in the temple according to custom and tradition. They should stage drama at the Siva temple at the time of the light Vigil (Siva Ratri). They should provide labourers from their respective Sahis to draw the cars at the time of the Car festival. If it is required that they meet certain expenses on such occasions they should do so no matter whether it is a loss or gain to them.

From these facts it is obvious that there was a well-knit Sahi organization, and there was a close relationship between the Sahis and the temple and palace. The Sahi organization was equivalent to Kala Vikasa Kendra of the present time giving training to the boys and girls in dance, music, and playing on musical instruments. The link between the Sahis and the temple and palace was not only of ritual and aesthetic order, but it was also of political importance in that the Gajapati Raja of Puri as the head of the State was the supreme administrative authority and all Sahis functioned as subordinate to this authority.

AKHADA AND JEGAGHAR (CULTURAL INSTITUTION OF SAHI)

The *Akhada* was a collection of smaller cultural institutions called *jegaghar*. The number of such institutions present in a Sahi depends upon its population. Normally for every hundred houses there is a *jegaghar* in the Sahi. Thus there are 4 *jegaghars* in Matimandapa Sahi, 12 in Harachandi Sahi, 8 in Bali Sahi, 7 in Kundeibenta Sahi, 5 in Dolamandapa Sahi, 4 in Goudbad Sahi, and 4 in Markandeswar Sahi.

As stated earlier the Sahi Akhada is formed by the *jegaghars* of a Sahi. These are independent of one another in all respects but they all in combination are dependent on the Sahi Akhada, which is constituted by the representatives of *jegaghars*. Each *jegaghar* has a specific name and its own organization. To illustrate, there are today seven *jegaghars* in Markandeswar Sahi, i.e., three new ones have been added to the four original *jegaghars*. They are (1) Rahasa Mahanty, (2) Bhatta Jega, (3) Sata Bakhara, (4) Bada Pokhari, (5) Duari Jega, (6) Panda Jega, and (7) Bada Mahapatra.

The members of a *jegaghar* are called *sanga* (companion). A man who wants to be a *sanga* of a *jegaghar* has to perform the rituals of anointing vermilion over the Mahabir (the monkey God), the presiding deity of the *jegaghar*, and feed its members. He must be an earning member of his family as an unemployed man is not eligible to become a member of the *jegaghar*. The panchayat of *jegaghar* consists of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Deputy Secretary, a Treasurer, and 10 working members. They continue in service so long as they perform their duties properly. Generally elections to these offices are held every three years and the newly elected members perform the rituals of anointing vermilion on the presiding deity of the *jegaghar*.

The members of the *jegaghar* play indoor games, practise gymnastic exercises, learn music and dancing and playing on musical instruments. The Government have recently provided financial grants to various *jegaghars* to meet the expenses incurred on recreational activities. Different *jegaghars* perform different festivals (*Jatra*) in their respective Sahis. These festivals form a part of the main festival which is performed by the *Akhada* of each Sahi which is called the Sahi festival (Sahi *jatra*). Thus each Sahi has its own festival which is performed in common by all the residents of the Sahi, and each *jegaghar* of the Sahi has its own festival which is performed by the *sangas* of the *jegaghar* independent of the other *jegaghars* of the Sahi. Each *jegaghar* has its own office building where the recreational activities and meetings are held. Its own orchards and tanks attached to the building are substantial sources of income to it. Each *jegaghar* has generally two presiding deities—one is a goddess like Ramchandi and the other Mahabir (Hanuman). Generally one of the deities is installed in the orchard and the other in the building of the *jegaghar*. The members of the *jegaghar* perform various festivals and rituals for both the deities and arrange feasts during these occasions.

Each *jegaghar* has accumulated substantial fund through the sale proceeds of fruits and vegetables grown in the orchard and garden and of the fish bred in the tanks. Besides, contribution mostly in kind are made by the various constituents, e.g., woodsellers provide free of cost whatever fuel is required for cooking for festivities. Similarly the brickmakers of the Sahi, to which the *jegaghar* belongs and others who pass by the *jegaghar*, contribute bricks free of cost and with which members repair or construct new buildings. If anyone among the *Sangas* knows carpentry and mason work he provides voluntary labour during his leisure. In general most of the works which the *jegaghar* undertakes are performed on a voluntary basis and all members of the *jegaghar* have unity among themselves. The *jegaghar* is a kind of cooperative society more interested in cultural and recreational activities and in the perpetuation of the cultural traditions of Puri.

The organization of various ritual services is based on caste.

The ritual services observed in the temple of Lord Jagannath are performed by various castes. As pointed out above the ritual functionaries of various castes perform their respective caste occupations as ritual services in the temple. This organization of services in the temple promotes similar organizations along caste lines in the villages and is responsible for their perpetuation in the rural area of Orissa. As guardians of the cultural traditions the Gajapati Rajas are very particular in maintaining caste in their Kingdom. To illustrate, we quote below a letter from Raja Dibyasingh Deb to the headmen of the Malika Caste giving instructions regarding caste organization in their community:

Sri Dibyasingh Deb Maharaja 19th Anka, Dhanu, the 25th day 1282 Sala.

I appoint Bali Malika as the Naik, Dina Palata Singh as Behera, Thapal Palatasingh as Bhai, Bisa Malika, and Siba Malika as elder and younger members of Malika Nijoga of the 14 Parganas. They are appointed to maintain order in the Nijoga. You will decide and look into whatever irregularities happen in the Nijoga. You will distribute among yourselves whatever dues you receive on the occasions of marriage and remarriage. You will see that no rebellion takes place in your jurisdiction.

You will hold your caste meeting regularly. You will note that this is most important. The inhabitants of your Nijoga will obey your instructions. I am addressing to the resident of Nijoga that you will abide by the decisions of the office-bearers of your caste confederacy. Any deviation from what I say will amount to your defeat in the meeting.

I came to know that the caste meetings are not held under the grove near the Lokanath Temple as was done previously. Why are they not held? I order that the caste meetings should be held regularly.

The Kesaba Guru Mahanta is the Guru of four Parganas. Inform him of what I have written in this letter. According to his advice you convene a public meeting of all Malikas of four Parganas and proclaim my orders as stated in this letter, and as you would receive from time to time.

You will get your dues amounting to 22 Khanas and half a pana of cowries on occasion of marriage and for deciding cases related to caste organization. You will also distribute them among yourselves according to past tradition. No Sardar and Nijoga will prevent you from enjoying your rights and performing your duties. The Naik will collect whatever amount of fruits from your trees and fish from your tanks as are due to the officers and distribute them among them by coming to Puri.

Note these instructions and orders.

ORGANIZATION OF BRAHMIN PANDITS AND SASAN VILLAGES

Of all the infrastructure set up by the Gajapati Rajas for the perpetuation of the Sacred Complex the Brahminical tradition was the most fundamental. The institutional form of this tradition is the Brahmin settlements called *Sasan* which they established within 10 miles of the sacred centre of Purusottam and had them associated with the temple through the Muktimandapa, the seat of the pandits representing these settlements for the perpetuation of the traditions of the Sacred Complex and the Jagannath temple.

The Gajapati Rajas have in all established 16 *Sasans* and 32 *Karabadas* (Sub-settlements) within a radius of 10 miles from Puri. The Hindu Kings brought the Brahmins to Orissa from Western and Northern India and granted them villages which they hold at a *tanki* rent (quit-rent) or free of rent on *Sanads* (deeds by which grants of lands and villages were made by the rulers) describing the terms and conditions of the grant. They also granted the Brahmins lands upon which to live and build temples and have tanks dug at which they could perform their daily rituals and seasonal festivals.

The Sasani Brahmins are exclusively devoted to the study of Vedas, and Dharma granthas, and to discussions and contemplation on topics concerning Sanskritic Hinduism and the Hindu way of life. They were equally competent and expert in military techniques and warfare. The most learned and orthodox Brahmins of the Sasan villages worked in Muktimandapa as Councillors to the Gajapati Rajas and the Jagannath temple on matters of spiritual and scriptural importance such as the reading—of omens, the best modes of averting the bad effects of some of them, and on other business of consequence deemed necessary for the management of the affairs of the temples.

The best of all Brahmins of the Sasan villages who had acquired skill and competence in military techniques and sound knowledge on scriptural literature was appointed as the Prime Minister of the Gajapati Rajas. He led the Gajapatis to the battle field and fought against the enemy and protected the kingdom against aggression. On the whole the guardianship and leadership of the Brahmin pandits in maintaining the Sanskritic traditions in perpetuity and in guarding against any deviation of the prescribed rites and duties performed in religious institutions by the ritual functionaries is most important.

The Brahmin pandits of Muktimandapa are consulted by the temple authorities about social usages and ritual matters pertaining to the temple. We state below four such questions which the temple manager placed before the Pandits and the decisions which they gave on these issues:

Q. 1. Whether or not the persons following the Brahmo faith are permitted to enter the temple of Lord Jagannath?

Decision: The Pandits consulted *Niladri Mahodaya*, *Bamadeb Samhita* and *Matsya Purana* and arrived at the following decision:

The followers of the Brahmo dharma follow a dharma having no sanction of the Vedas. They do not have any faith in Idol worship. They do not observe any caste system as we do and they dine together irrespective of caste differences. These habits and ways of life are against the Vedic principles and traditions which govern the organization of the temple of Lord Jagannath. By the force of these explanations they are forbidden to enter the temple.

Q. 2. Whether or not the food purchased from the sale proceeds of the consecrated food of Lord Jagannath can be offered to the deity?

Decision: The consecrated food is charged with the divine power which enables one who partakes it to attain heaven. To offer the food obtained from the sale proceeds of the food which was once offered to the deity and doing this for self-interest is according to the Dharmasastras not acceptable, because the right of self does not accrue to anything which has already been donated or doled out as a gift. The things which are already offered to the deity once are to be understood as being entirely consumed by the deity. Therefore, to sell the consecrated food for the purpose of utilizing the sale proceeds for purchasing food and offering it again to the deity is not in accord with scriptural sanction.

Q. 3. Whether or not the Hindus who had been to England or who publicly accept food cooked from the hands of the Muslims can enter the temple of Lord Jagannath?

Decision:

(A) Those who have been overseas for prosecuting their studies and in obedience to the unavoidable orders of the Government and at the time of emergencies which do not amount to a pleasure trip to the islands across the ocean and on returning home have undergone ritual purification and are readmitted to their own society can enter any Hindu temple.

(B) Those who have accepted cooked food from the hands of the Muslims for a year can be admitted into their society after undergoing ritual purification. These persons who are accepted by the society may enter the temple. If they have been accepting cooked food for more than one year they have become Muslims and should be treated as such and, therefore, cannot enter the temple. However, if they undertake heavy prayaschita and undergo rigorous ritual purification and are thereafter admitted into their society they enter the temple.

Q. 4. What sort of *Achara* and *Byabahara* will be befitting the *Sebaks* of the temple?

Decision: The *Sebaks* who are Sadachara Parayana, and have never accepted food in the house of the Sudras and are not in company with them and are free from adulterous offences can perform ritual services in the temple of Lord Jagannath.

4. The Minor Rajas of Feudatory States

SUBORDINATE to the Gajapati Rajas are many minor Rajas of Feudatory States who are the guardians of the temples, *Maths*, *Sasan* villages located in their respective kingdoms. These religious and cultural institutions which are smaller in dimension are an integral part of the larger Sacred Complex of Puri. The minor Rajas are connected with the Gajapati Rajas and the Jagannath Temple of Puri by a network of social, cultural and religious relationships and it is through these relationships that the Sacred Complex is maintained and perpetuated throughout Orissa. A sketch of the minor Rajas vis-a-vis the Gajapati Raja and the Sacred Complex is given below:

MINOR RAJAS' SERVICES OFFERED TO THE PARAMOUNT RAJA OF PURI

Raja Purusottam Deb (1465-1495) granted estates to the minor Rajas who paid tribute to him as a mark of subordination to him, and came to be known as Tributary Chiefs—Karada Raja. These minor Rajas served the Raja of Puri in various capacities as the *Sebaks* do to him. When the Raja comes out of his palace on a visit either to the temple or any other palace the minor Rajas are expected to accompany him and perform their respective duties as acts of respect. These duties are granted as marks of favour by the Raja of Puri, he being the paramount Raja of Orissa (Gajapati). A ceremony is observed in the Raja's court while bestowing such favours. This ceremony of bestowal is called *Sadi-Bandha*.[13] The *Sadi* is a valuable piece of cloth, which is tied to the head of the person who is favoured to do a particular duty in honour of the Raja of Puri. The *Sadi-Bandha* is typical of conferring any favour, title, service or estate on any person. No *Sebak* of the temple is allowed to perform his rituals in the temples unless he undergoes the ceremony of *Sadi-Bandha*. Similarly no Mahanta of a monastery is recognized as such unless he undergoes the rituals of *Sadi-Bandha*. On this occasion the incumbent pays a fee called *Nazar* to the Raja who then orders the sacred cloth to be tied to his head and awards formal sanction to serve in the temple in the case of the *Sebak* or to act as a Mahanta of a *Math.* People of various categories seek various types of privileges of the Raja and the Raja confers upon them such privilege to perform by means of *Sadi-Bandha* which is nothing but a formal way of giving royal sanction and approval to the incumbents to enjoy such privileges. To illustrate a few cases of *Sadi-Bandha* are given here.

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[13] *Sadi-Bandha* (tying a cloth): It is a complex religious and administrative phenomenon. By this process ritual and administrative approval is accorded to (1) new appointments in ritual or administrative services of the temple and the palace, (2) bestowal of privileges such as special types of services to be performed in the temple or palace, and (3) to use honorific titles conferred by the Gajapati Raja of Puri on persons of nobility as a mark of personal distinction. The procedure of the phenomenon is as follows:

A person desirous of *Sadi-Bandha* for any of the purposes listed above submits a petition to the royal court stating the purpose for which he prays for *Sadi-Bandha*. The Raja scrutinizes his request by holding a proper inquiry into the matter and about the applicant. If he is satisfied and considers his request as legitimate and genuine he passes orders for the *Sadi-Bandha* in the usual manner.

The temple scribe and Tadau Karana provide necessary cloth (*sadi*) to be used for the purpose. The Bhandar Mekapa anoints sandal paste on the cloth and gives it over to Patajoshi Mahapatra, head of the *Sebaks* of all categories. He wraps this cloth which is now sanctified on the head of the incumbent at the door of the temple called Jaya-bijaya. Thereafter the incumbent circumambulates the temple three times and prays to the deity and then goes to his house.

Sadi-Bandha is performed in a variety of ways depending upon the person for whom it is performed and the type of cloth used and the purpose for which it is performed. In the case of Mahanayak *Sebaks* (saints, mahantas, landlords, parichhas, tadau, and temple scribes) it is the Bhitarch Mahapatra who performs the tying of the *Sadi* on the incumbent at the Jaya-bijaya door and from there all present proceed in a procession to the house of Talcha Mahapatra where the incumbent has to undergo certain rituals and thereafter the Sadi is untied by Talcha Mahapatra.

Case 1. A letter illustrating such a bestowal of favour on a noble man of Badamba is translated and given below:

Shri Bira Kishore Deb Maharaja's 11th year of his reign, Dhanu (Sagittarius) 23rd day. [Corresponding European calendar date cannot be ascertained unless this particular Bira Kishore's period of reign is found out].

This day summons Paramanik, Raja of Puri confers on Padmalava Mangaraj Mahapatra Birabara of Badamba the duty of performing *chhuri-khanda* (knife-dagger) [literally it means that he would hold the dagger and knife when he accompanies the Raja on his visit]. For *Sadi-Bandha* he is offered from the storeroom of the palace a kind of cloth called *Nakshtra-Bhushan* and another variety of cloth called *Khandua.*

How the nobleman on whom was bestowed the honour of bearing the knife and dagger had his sight of Lord Jagannath is as follows.

Benudar Mangaraja of Badamba came on his own palanquin with his people to the temple for *darsan* of Lord Jagannath. He came at the time of the evening meal (*Sandhya Dhupa*). Candles were lighted in the temple enabling him to have a clear sight of the deity. He offered gifts (*Pindika*) and three pieces of a kind of cloth called *Kala Mahuda.* He circumambulated the temple and had a view of the minor deities and then left the temple.

Thus the minor Rajas of different feudatory States were offered Sadi-Bandha to do several kinds of duties in honour of the Raja of Puri.

A list of bestowals and services offered by the minor Rajas as obtained from the temple scribe is given below:

Name of the State		*Nature of duties entrusted to perform*
Tigiria	...	Parichha (to hold the golden cane)
Mayurbhanja	...	—do—
Talcher	...	To hold sword (Khanda)
Ranpur	...	To hold dagger and sword (Chhuri-khanda)
Bamanda	...	To hold betel leaf receptacle (pana bata)
Nayagarh	...	To hold spittoon (Pikadani)

Another case may be used to show how Raja of Puri granted accompaniment to his minor Rajas during their visit to the temple.

Case 2. Shri Shri Shri Ram Chandra Deb Maharaja's 32nd year of reign—

Concerning the visit by Bidyadhar Mahapatra of Dhenkanal, to the temple for Darsan.

Obey the instructions as given in the letter of the Raja of Puri. Raja Lokanath Ray Singh Bhramarbar Mahapatra of Jhadakhanda Dhenkanal is my brother. When he comes to Puri to pay his visit to the Lord Jagannath show him the temple in the traditional manner. His palanquin, white and black umbrellas, flat umbrella, hair-whisk, peacock tail, sword, silver trumpet, may be carried up to the Lions' gate. The umbrella will be kept shut and left at the Lions' gate.

But other paraphernalia may be taken along with him up to Jagmohan [the door at the far end from the images]. Having put on a shirt [*jama*] and tight fitting trousers [*paijama*] and turban he offers new pieces of cloth (neuchhali) at the door way called the Jaya-bijay.

After this accompanied with noble men serving in the royal court [*Patra*] he may go down near the platform and pay his homage to Lord Jagannath. He will give his gifts which would consist of five discs of gold and five hundred rupees. He will give five pieces of cloth. After this he will do the duty of waving the hair-whisk of the golden handle at the transverse beam.

> After this he will be guided to see other deities according to tradition and whatever gifts he pays at will at these places will be deposited in the storeroom. If he comes to visit the temple at night his palanquin will be kept on the seventh step at the southern gate. He will be escorted up to the Lord's seat for his sight. This is set down in the handwriting of the Raja of Puri (Shri Hasta) himself.

In like manner, the prospective mahants of various monasteries apply at the appropriate time to the Raja of Puri for what is called the *Mahantai Sadi* (Royal approval of mahantaship). They pay their dues (*nazar*) to the Raja and seek to undergo the ceremony connected with the *Sadi-Bandha*. For example, Ram Krishna Ramanuja Das of Uttarparswa Math applied in Sala 1267 to the Raja of Puri for the Mahantai Sadi and paid Rs. 150 as *nazar* for the purpose. The Raja of Puri accepted the *nazar* and passed a royal order in the form of a *Sanad* sanctioning the *Mahantai Sadi* in favour of Ram Krishna to act as mahanta of Uttarparswa Math.

Similarly many mahants and persons of noble families and royal lineage appeal from time to time to the royal court for royal sanction to offer special services to Lord Jagannath such as the service of waving the whisk or holding the torch in honour of the deity at some specific place inside the temple. For example in 1315, the Raja of Puri allowed *Sadi-Bandha* to the Raja Janaki Ballava Sen Bahadur for performing the service of waving the whisk in temple. For this the incumbent paid a *nazar* of Rs. 200. In 1288, the queen of Keonjhar State appealed to the Raja of Puri to permit her to offer food (*Panti*) to Lord Jagannath in front of her building which is situated in the main street of Puri town. She paid a *nazar* of Rs. 60. The Raja of Puri accorded sanction by granting *Sadi-Bandha* to her for this purpose.

In some cases the Raja accords sanction to perform in perpetuity a particular service such as the waving of the whisk and issues a *sanad* to this effect, to such persons. A *sanad* related to the services of the Ratna Paduka and the whisk as granted in perpetuity to Jagat Ballava Das is reproduced below:

Case 3. Letter to the Bhandara Karana, Deul Karana, Bhandar Mekapa and other Karjis of the Shri Purusottam Temple.

I accord permission to Jagat Ballava Das son of Narahari Das of Chasir village, Puri district for offering his ancestral service of the Ratna Paduka in the Jagannath Temple. According to the *sanad* this service is being done by the members of his family from one generation to the next. He has to perform this service accordingly without neglecting it at any time.

Besides, he may be given the whisk from the store and put to the service of waving the whisk at Chandan Argali, on the Car, on the *Chaps* and in different festivities. There should be no violation of this order. For the service offered by him he may be given Rasabali and one piece of Mandua from the *Candan* house everyday for all the 26 days of the *Candan* festival. He is also granted fire from Lord Jagannath's oven [Vaishnabagni—a great privilege which is used at the time of the cremation ceremony. The devotees of Lord Jagannath want to live in Puri as *Tirthabasi*—resident of the pilgrim centre—in order to have the opportunity of receiving *Vaishnabagni* in the belief that *Vaishnabagni* helps in attaining emancipation—Author]. No one should prevent him from having this. Shri Ram Chandra Deb, 27th Anka, Mesa the 23rd Day.

Some *sanads* show that in addition to the service of the whisk, the Raja had accorded sanction in favour of the petitioner to enjoy other special privileges which are rarely granted to ordinary persons. The Raja holds in great esteem the monasteries established by the Brahmacharis of Sankar professing monism, and grants sepecial privileges to the Brahmcharis of these Maths. A typical *sanad* containing special privileges granted to a Bramachari is reproduced below:

Case 4. A sanad given by Rani Suryamani Patamahadei. This letter is addressed to all Parichhas, Karjis, Suaras and Mahasuaras of the temple of Purusottam, Sardar of the town, Bisoi incharge of the six Bhogas, and Karanas of the four gateways.

It is ordered that you are to put Baldeb Brahmachari disciple of Lachhaman Prakash Brahmachari in the service of waving the fan at the Sinhasan (Lions' platform) and of waving the whisk in the Anasar Pindi of the temple, on the Car and on the *Chaps* at the time of the Candan festival on a hereditary basis. For this service he should be given daily one ball of sweet (*Kora*) from Gopalaballava, one small pot of Ballava three pieces of betel leaves, one small pot of sweet rice and one small pot of Ada Pacheli (Khechudi) from the Kota Bhog of the morning offerings, one small pot of rice served on plates (*Thala Arna*) from the noon offering, and one pot of Pakhala, one piece of Mattapuli, and one pot of Ghasapani from the evening offering. He is also to be given in the 12 festivals, a piece of sandalwood, and *oddana* Khandua [a piece of cloth covered over the deity on the occasion of Oddana Sasti held in the month of December], three yards of flannel used to cover the Car and some wood from Anasar. He will anoint sandal paste (*sarbanga lagi*) all over the body of the deity and nobody should obstruct him. No share should be accepted from whatever offerings [Khatani] are offered by his monastery to the deity in festivities, and the Brahmachari should not be charged boat fees for bringing by boat anything, like wood, bamboo or stone for use in his monastery. All food stuff brought through any of the four entrance gates by the monastery is tax free and no one should charge anything for it. Nobody should cut any tree present in the garden of the monastery. The scribe in charge of the earthen vessel should not keep any account of such vessels used by the monastery for offering consecrated food to the deity. The *sebaks* and servants of the monastery should not be called upon any time to do any work free of charge in the temple or in the palace. The Brahmachari is provided with three storerooms near the Narayan temple at the northern gate. They are given to the Brahmanchari to be used on a hereditary basis. He should be given a potful of fire [*Vaishnabagni*] from the kitchen of the Lord Jagannath, and whenever he visits the temple for *Darsan* he is entitled to carry two torches of the conical type (*Bhanda*).

15th Anka, 29th Day of Makar.

AMRUT MANOHI LAND AND RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE RAJA OF PURI VIS-A-VIS TEMPLE AND THE MINOR RAJAS

Lands donated and dedicated by the chiefs of feudatory states to the services of Lord Jagannath were a significant link of close relationship between them and the Raja of Puri. The endowment of the landed properties is known as *Amrut Manohi* (food offered to Lord Jagannath). The lands are situated in various princely States and the produce from them is collected by the *sebaks* or *mahants* who serve as the *Marfatdars* of these properties. It was the responsibility of the *Marfatdars* to offer food out of the produce of *Amrut Manohi* lands to the deity in the name of the chiefs who donated them. Once the lands become *Amrut Manohi* the Raja of Puri as Superintendent of the temple extends his administrative control over them and takes interest in seeing that the produce of these lands is used for the purpose for which they are dedicated. The relationship of the Raja of Puri with the chiefs of the feudatory States is maintained through the supervision of the endowed property and the food offered to the deity from the produce of such property. A copy of the relevant portion of the letter from the Superintendent, Nayagarh State to the Political Agent and Commissioner, Orissa Feudatory States in regard to a query made by the Raja of Puri is given below to illustrate the nature of *Amrut Manohi* land and the purpose of donation and the management of such property:

> As regards the terms of the *sanad* it appears from the settlement records that the grant mentioned in the Serial No. 1 of the statement was made by the late Raja Binayak Singh Mandhata when he had been to Puri to the Mahanta of Gangamata Math for putting flower and tulsi leaves on the deity on behalf of the chief.
>
> The endowments shown in Serial Nos. 2 to 6 were granted by the said Raja to the Mahanta of Dakhina Parswa Math with the condition that Mahaprasad be sent to Nayagarh Rajbati [palace of the chief of Nayagarh] on every Ekadasi day [11th Day of the fortnight]. Mahaprasad is being sent to the Rajbati regularly according to this condition.
>
> The grant mentioned in the Serial No. 7 was made by the late Raja Ladukeswar Singh Mandhata, while he had been to Puri to Jagmohan Panda and others with the condition that they should put flower and *tulsi* leaves on Lord Jagannath daily.
>
> In this connection I beg to state that four persons, viz., Ram Chandra Badapanda, Jagamohan Badapanda, Janeswar Badapanda, and Gopinath Badapanda of Hari Chandi Sahi, Puri have applied to me (Superintendent) to be appointed as Sebayats in place of the recorded Sebayats noted in Serial No. 7 of the statement. I will pass orders on their applications after this inquiry is completed.

From the temple record room we have information regarding *Amrut Manohi* lands donated by the chiefs of Baud. A village called Moosad is donated and Ram Chandra Pratihari of Dolamandapa Sahi of Puri as receiver of the produce worth Rs.200 of such land. Nilgiri (500 manas of land scattered over several villages and some *sebaks* of the temple as the marfatdars of the property), Bamra (Rs. 111/10 only paid yearly on account of *Amrut Manohi* for the deity), Athgarh (vast landed property of about 200 acres), Baramba (vast landed property scattered in 32 villages), Hindol (vast landed property), and Dhenkanal (vast landed property scattered in 5,004 plots of 10 villages), and many other princely States have donated substantial estates as *Amrut Manohi* to Lord Jagannath. The motive behind such donations is to offer food to the deity and pray for a long and healthy life of the donors, and feed the sadhus and beggars with the consecrated food. The idea is that a good life can be attained by feeding the consecrated food to sadhus and beggars.

In addition, many Zamindars of Orissa who are equal to the chiefs of the States in rank and wealth have also donated land to Lord Jagannath for the purpose of *Amrut Manohi*. The noted Zamindars among them are those of Garh Madhupur, Kanika, Parikud, and many others of the Orissa State. Amrut Manohi lands were endowed by the people of wealth belonging to different parts of the country and the produce of these endowed properties are collected in all cases by the *sebaks* of the temple and offer them in the form of *Bhog* according to the terms and conditions of the *sanad*. In many cases the *marfatdars* of such properties do not utilize the produce for the purpose of *Amrut Manohi* and spend it in their own interest. To illustrate, a pleader from Jabalpur wrote on the 12th July 1937 to the manager of the Jagannath temple stating that the lands and gifts endowed Sri Jagannath which are under the charge of several *pandas* of the temple are not properly utilized for offering food to Lord Jagannath. He suggested that a thorough inquiry into this matter be made and the *pandas* in charge of the endowed properties warned so that the misappropriation of the donated property could be stopped.

In some cases marfatdarship of *Amrut Manohi* lands change hands through sale deeds and in the process the produce from such lands is used for personal gain and not for *Amrut Manohi* purposes.

DISCONTINUANCE OF CAR TIMBERS BY THE DASPALLA STATE

During Raja Ram Chandra's reign the feudatory states ceded to the Government of India in 1946 and as a result he lost most of his royal power as the Gajapati Raja of Puri and his link with the tirbutary chiefs was in a large measure weakned. One of the major consequences of this is that the minor chiefs started neglecting some of their customary duties to the temple on some plea or the other.

The Car festival, for instance, is the most important festival held at Puri in the months of June-July every year. The chief of the Daspalla State supplies 862 planks of timber of various dimensions for the construction of different parts of the Car used in the festival. It is stated in the *Bengal Gazetteer* that, "The chief was paying no tribute to the Maratha by virtue of the concession granted by the latter in consideration of the former supplying, free of all cost, all the timber annually required for the Jagannath Cars at Puri."[14]

The Daspalla State was supplying the required timber regularly till 1944. From 1945 for three years the supply of the timber was most irregular and the chief started charging the temple administration the cost of collection and transport of the timber. Owing to delay in one of these years the temple administration arranged on its own to float these logs by the

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[14] "Daspalla State"; para. 1, p. 2159; *Bengal Gazetteer*, *Orissa Feudatory States*, L.E.B. Cobden-Ramsay, ICS (1910), Calcutta, Bengal Secretariat Book Depot.

River Mahanadi up to Cuttack wherefrom they were transported to Maltipatpur by train at the cost of the temple. Some official correspondence concerning this subject is given below to show how complex this matter has become in recent times.

The Collector wrote the following letter No. 933 dated the 16th January 1948 to the Administrator, Daspalla State for expediting transport of the Car timbers to Puri. "A specific ceremony is to be performed on the 15th February 1948 in connection with the Car festival. If the logs of wood do not reach on or before that date it is apprehended that the car festival may have to be stopped for the year 1948." The Collector therefore asked the administrator to try to send the timber to Cuttack wherefrom it could be transported by rail to Maltipatpur.

The Administrator was not directly under the control of the Collector of Puri. He had to place his requisition for car timber through the chief Administrator and special commissioner, Orissa State, stationed at Sambalpur, Orissa. The Collector addressed a letter to the chief Administrator on the matter and in response to his letter the Chief Administrator wrote a letter (D.O. No. FL-15/48-1096 dated the 14th February 1948) to the Administrator, Daspalla about the Car festival of Puri and supply of Car timber by Daspalla. The relevant portion of this letter says: "Daspalla has been supplying timbers for Lord Jagannath Car festival at Puri free of cost from time immemorial in lieu of certain territories given to the State for the purpose by one of the ancient kings of Orissa."

In response to these letters the Administrator, Daspalla State, submitted his reply to the Collector, Puri, in his letter D.O. No. 186 dated 21st February 1948 with a copy to the Chief Administrator's office. The relevant portion of his letter is quoted below:

> The car timbers are transported from Gania side (a place on the

bank of the river in Daspalla) and usually when there is high flood in the river, Daspalla Darbar floats these car timbers by the river route and delivery is given to the authorities of the Jagannath temple every year at Dhaunria [near Maltipatpur a place situated seven miles to the north of Puri] free of extraction and transport charges. Up to the year 1944 the car timbers were being extracted and transported by the Daspalla Darbar on bethi (forced) labour. In 1944 the political department pressed the Darbar to abolish the bethi as all other bethi works have been abolished much long back and so the Darbar did not agree to supply the timbers at their cost. Daspalla was in the position of granter and the temple, the grantee was responsible to look to the extraction and transportation of timbers. Since this year the car timbers are being extracted and transported at the cost of the Jagannath temple through the assistance of Daspalla Darbar. The Raja of Puri sends his agent to Daspalla for this purpose.

The Administrator, Daspalla, got the timbers transported with intimation to the Collector, Puri, as follows:

> There were arrears to be paid by the temple office for payment of the wages of the coolies and boatmen. I am sending the forester Shri Padman Charan Panda with this letter and request you to kindly arrange to remit through him the balance of Rs. 2,393-4-0. I beg to add that the boatmen are very much pressing for payment of their wages and it is learnt that they would not allow unloading of the timbers unless payment is made at the spot. The amount may therefore be sent through the forester for making payment.

On receipt of this letter the Collector, Puri, addressed a letter to the manager of the Jagannath temple who is also the Dewan of the Raja of Puri for payment. The manager wrote to the Collector, Puri, in his letter No. 257 dated 27-3-48 requesting him to take immediate steps for the transport of the car timber from Mangalabag, Cuttack, to Maltipatpur railway station so that they would reach there on the 13th April 1948 on which day an important ceremony was fixed for performance in connection with the construction of the cars. He stated that unless at least 21 logs of car timber reached Puri railway station the ceremony could not be performed. He also wrote that he was prepared to pay at once the balance of Rs. 2,393-4-0 from the temple fund to clear the arrears and meet the expenses of the transport of the timbers.

On receipt of this letter the Collector, Puri, wrote a letter to the Assistant Transportation Officer, S.E. Railway Khurda Road (No. 257/C dated the 28th March 1948) to supply ten wagons for transport of the timbers to Puri and in accordance with this letter the railway authorities took their time in providing wagons and transporting the timbers to Puri. The process required much time and the timbers did not reach in time. As a result the festival to be held on the 13th March 1948 was postponed to another date.

The entire exercise of reproducing the letter is to point out how complicated and time-consuming the procedure of transportation of the car timbers from Daspalla to Puri has become. The job of extraction and transport action of car timbers was done voluntarily with least effort in the pre-independence period and very little expense was involved in it and it was accomplished in the shortest time possible. But as a result of change, after independence the overall administration of the State and the customary practices followed in the management of the temple affairs the ritual services were bureaucratized and for their fulfilment and compliance it had become necessary to go through many administrative processes which invariably caused delay in getting such services, accomplished. In the post-independence period it was usually not possible to adhere to any ritual time schedule because of difficulties arising from red-tapism and the bureaucratic procedure. Further, the bureaucratization of the services which was accomplished purely by the force of ritual sanctity and by means of land grants exerted new economic pressures on the temple treasury which found it difficult to meet such expenses out of its limited sources of income.

5. Conclusion

THE tradition in Puri is a Cultural Complex comprising many interlocking elements. It is a network of different social and cultural relations within and between communities at different levels of socio-cultural integration. In the framework of the tradition the communities serve as unit points and the relations and interactions stand for the connecting lines and the channels of transmission. The generationwise and communitywise cultural communication represents the social organization of tradition.

Essentially the tradition is supported by three pillars: 1. Faith with devotion (*Nista*), 2. Cognition (*Jignyasa*), and 3. Behaviour and procedure (*Achara and Padhati*).

A tradition as an on-going process is followed with faith and devotion, otherwise it loses its force and importance and is subject to decline. The ritual functionaries performed in the past, their respective rituals and services in the Jagannath temple ran smoothly and timely although the payment made to them for their labour was in the form of gifts of consecrated food. There was the least disorganization in the ritual services. But today we notice utter mismanagement in the organization and performance of services of the temple, even though the functionaries earn more from various sources including the temple and have formal security of service established by the record of rights.

The reason for this change in performance is that in the past the functionaries considered their service in the temple as a great privilege and a divine gift. They also believe that the privilege which they enjoy as the functionaries of Lord Jagannath was a reward for the good life in their previous life. Because of their close association with Lord Jagannath the public treated them as *Tirtha* gurus. An outlook of this kind was entirely devoid of any economic consideration. Instead, it was full of faith on the Lord and devotion to service. But with high cost of living and increased pilgrimage their *Nista* for the ritual services has been considerably weakened, they have grown money-minded and the profit motive has been strengthened, resulting in attenuation and mismanagement of the temple tradition.

The second supporting pillar of the tradition is its cognizability. A group of people follow something year after year without questioning. By doing so the practice assumes the form of a tradition, and becomes known thus to the public. For instance, the Bengali devotees of Lord Jagannath follow a tradition called Shri Gundicha Marjana (sweeping and cleaning of the Gundicha temple). A day before this festival the Bengali devotees go in a procession starting from a monastery called the Jhanjapita Math to the Gundicha temple along the grand road of Puri, accompanying themselves with devotional songs and music (kirtan) and on reaching the destination the men and women of the group perform the services of sweeping and cleaning the Gundicha temple and its compound. This work was initiated by Sri Chaitanya when he visited Puri 300 years ago, and since then it is being followed by his devotees so much so that today it has become a great ritual tradition.

The day on which this tradition is observed is fixed, and the people who follow it, the place where it is practised and the route along which the procession goes, and why such a tradition is followed, are all known to the public. People talk about it when the occasion comes and observe how it is performed and comment upon it on the basis of their past knowledge and present observation.

If a festival of this magnitude, for some reason or the other is not held one year people make anxious enquiries about it in order to find out what has happened and why it could not be held. They express concern about it.

To take another instance, the Gajapati Raja of Puri enjoys the privilege of sweeping (*Chherapanhara*) the Cars with golden broomsticks. Until this is done the deities are not brought up to their respective seats on the Cars. One year on account of certain difficulties the Raja could not perform this ritual and the news about it spread far and wide and the people inquired anxiously fearing trouble during the festival. It is the custom that in case the Raja fails to perform this ritual on account of illness, or absence from the town, his deputy functionary, the Mudirastha, may do so on his behalf. Accordingly he was called upon to perform it and thereafter other rituals were performed and the public was satisfied and felt happy.

What is revealing in this instance is that anything which is observed uninterruptedly over a period of time in great solemnity becomes a tradition and if it is not performed at any time people become anxious and concerned. Thus one can find out what is a tradition by studying the inquiring minds of the people and estimate its force and strength by studying their concern and feelings at the time of any deviation.

The third aspect of the tradition is the behaviour of the people in regard to a tradition which they follow and procedures they follow in observing it. Every tradition has a set of rules which the people follow when observing it. Whether or not the people follow all the rules and procedures is determined by their mental orientation towards the concerned tradition. For example, a pilgrim in a pilgrim centre has to observe a set of rules and has to fulfil certain prescribed duties to achieve his objectives. He may observe all the procedures if he so wished and has the means and time to devote to these duties. If he lacks them he may do it in a perfunctory manner. The same is the case in respect of the tradition of offering food to the manes. If a person has no faith in the transmigration of the soul and afterlife he may not perform any ritual connected with it, or if he does in order to save himself from public criticism he takes a short-cut and does it in a mock manner. We can thus find out the impact of a tradition on a people by studying their outlook towards it and the manner in which they perform it.

Not all traditions are alike, they are of different types depending upon their sources of origin and their constituent elements and their conformity or otherwise to the levels of thought and action. Some traditions are derived from the *Sastras* and Sanskritic knowledge while others have no perceptible roots in them. The former are called *Pura*, that is, the traditions having scriptural and Sanskritic sanctions and are followed by ways approved by them. The latter are called *Prokta*, that is, the traditions which have no root in the *Sastra* and are followed according to oral knowledge. Most of the rituals performed in the temple of Lord Jagannath conform to the *Sastriya* traditions while the techniques of potmaking which varies from place to place have their origin in oral and local tradition.

This does not mean that these two types of traditions are separable entities; nor does it mean that there is no local tradition in the temples and pilgrim centres, and therefore that no scriptural traditions are followed in the villages and in the techniques of potmaking. The services of Daitas in the temple of Lord Jagannath have their genesis in the Savara (a tribal community) tradition of worship while the works of the silk weavers who supply cloths with the famous Gita Govinda woven into them for the adornment of the Lord Jagannath trace their origin to Sanskritic traditions.

The coexistence of both types of traditions in the same operation develops into a composite formation and in order to understand the structure of such traditions one will have to shuttle between the villages and the pilgrim town.

There are certain traditions which are observed in common by the town-dwellers and the villagers. In some cases the town-dwellers who perform a particular tradition fail to give any meaning to it; but they continue to perform it in an automatic fashion without any mental reservations. People in villages also perform the same tradition, not blindly but with correct knowledge about it. Similarly village folk follow certain traditions for which they are not able to offer any explanation whereas the town people who follow the same traditions have sufficient knowledge about their origin and purpose. Thus in order to make a scientific study of various types of traditions regarding their structure and organization one has to hope between the town and the village. In the case of certain traditions the village provides their philosophy and the town provides the facts, and in certain others the reverse is the case.

Even in the same town or in the same village both types of traditions are in existence and people who live there side by side either follow both traditions for the same or different reasons or some follow one and others the other. For instance, the pilgrim town of Puri is inhabited by the ritual functionaries representing the *Sastriya* and scholastic traditions and the fishermen represent the unlettered, *non-sastriya* and oral traditions. Both the communities make use of the temple of Lord Jagannath in different ways. The former use it ordinarily as a place of worship and ritual services whereas the latter takes it as an indicator of direction while on sea. The ritual functionaries, rarely if ever, visit the seashore, because it is the belief that to visit the house of relatives often is bad manners, and the sea, being one of their relatives (the sea is the home of Goddess Lakshmi, the wife of Lord Jagannath who is considered as one of their relatives) is generally avoided as far as possible. But in the case of the fishermen the sea is their home and the seashore is where they mend their nets, repair their boats, and help pilgrims and visitors to a sea-bath. But the temple is very much away from them. As they are of low caste they are forbidden to enter the temple. Thus their daily life is spent on the sea while that of the temple priests in the temple.

There are certain traditions which people follow in common irrespective of differences of nativity, caste and cultural orientation. The scriptural instructions which the Muktimandapa Pandit Sabha located in the Jagannath temple prescribes for purification in the case of offences committed by killing a cow are the same for all Hindus and all people refer to this institution for *Sastriya* advice (*Byabastha*) in the case of breach of tradition. The Muktimandapa, we may say, occupies the core of Hindu Society for its work of unifying the followers of different traditions.

The study of marriage customs in different parts of India reveals similar phenomenon of unity in a diversity of traditions. The procedure adopted in marriage among various communities who are within the fold of Sanskritic Hinduism comprises both the types of traditions—the *Sastriya* and Scriptural traditions and the local tradition. As the term indicates the local tradition varies from area to area. That is why, the traditions observed by a community of one area are different from those observed by the same community in another area. To illustrate, the curry stone is used as an important article in rituals at marriage among the Oriyas whereas earthernwares replace the curry stone among the Bengalis in such occasions.

There is variation in tradition even at the family level. The family traditions (*Kula Dharma*) the community or caste traditions (*Jati Dharma*) and the local traditions (*Desha Dharma*) in regard to a particular custom, say marriage, may be different, but the *Sastriya* traditions observed in the marriage ceremonies all over Hindu India are almost the same. But people give so much importance to their caste and regional traditions that they ignore the unifying elements of the common *Sastriya* traditions. Although India presents a diversity in the material custom at the local levels we tend to overlook in the moments of our forgetfulness that she presents a unity at the *Sastriya*, Sanskritic and philosophical levels.

All traditions are changeable, but the rate at which they change depends mainly on local and temporal factors. Traditions depending upon locality are relatively more permanent or continue for a longer period of time than those depending upon time and social conditions. The fishermen of Puri town, for instance, live by fishing because, their homes are on the shore and the sea is most favourable to the occupation which gives them security and satisfaction on a permanent basis.

In contrast to this, the Paiks of Khurda, a small town near Puri are a martial community and they represent the rank and file during the reign of the independent Gajapati Kings of Orissa. Military practices (*Paik Sadhana*) and training in the use of arms and ammunitions were one of the most important aspects of the feudal system. Whenever the Paik community evinced less interest in military activities as a result of the influence of Vaishnavism and priestly services the feudal lords expressed a deep concern and tried by various means to revive their military tradition and rehabilitate them as a martial community. But after Independence the Paiks were no longer required to carry on their military activities, and therefore, they had taken to agriculture and business. The Paiks have very well adjusted themselves to this change in their occupation from fighting to ploughing. This is a case of adjustment to the changing time.

Similarly we notice a change in the bathing and eating habits of people. There was a time when people used to take food only twice a day. But now they take food three or more times a day. Thus time changes habits and traditions.

We have observed some changes in the organization of services in the temple of Lord Jagannath; but there is insignificant change in the ritual traditions. The life style of the recent Rajas of Puri shows a growing secularization but their ritual services in the temple do not show much attenuation and the public image of God-King remains undiminished, for the reason that these traditions are based on both locality and time. Although the traditions which derive from a combination of space and time factors are subject to change. They change less rapidly than those which rest on time alone and both types of traditions again change faster than those which are based only on locality.

Whether a tradition is receptive to change or not depends upon various social and ecological conditions. In spite of poverty a man coming from a noble family may refuse to accept food which is doled out from the community kitchen organized at the time of natural calamities such as drought or flood. In like manner a man adopts new dress patterns or food habits when he shifts from his native place to new surrounding. The ecological conditions create new traditions. In some areas people are not in the habit of taking a bath because a bath involves changing clothes which they cannot afford. Also for want of facilities of privacy to bathe naked they go without bathing for many days. But in other cases the forces of sanctity and ritual cleanliness are so great that bathing becomes a compulsory tradition and the financial and ecological considerations are no bar to it.

Ritual sanction exerts tremendous force in continuing a tradition. Certain categories of ritual functionaries like the Priests (*Puja Pandas*) of the temple of Lord Jagannath are required by tradition to wear a special type of silken cloth woven at a particular place. There are better clothes available in the market but any deviation in this tradition amounts to disqualification for temple service. That is why there are very few changes in the dress patterns of ritual functionaries. Necessity, otherwise, is no consideration for the continuity of a tradition when the ritual importance and inducement are paramount.

This should not be misunderstood to mean that necessity has no role to play in the function of continuity of a tradition. The women of Orissa in most cases observe *purdah*. It was initiated in 1640 when the Moghuls invaded Orissa and started their depredations. The *purdah* was meant for covering their faces, thereby hiding themselves from the oppression of the foreign elements. Today there is no need for the *purdah* system, but it continues to be practised. Traditions which have been established through years of practice die hard. The same is the case in regard to the use of nose ornaments among the Oriya women. Piercing the nose and wearing nose ornaments were not indigeneous customs. It is a case of cultural borrowing which took place as a result of contact of Oriya women years ago with Muslim ladies who are in the habit of following this custom. But this custom is no longer in vogue among women of the present generation. There has been a shift in emphasis from the traditional ornament to the modern ways of adornment and dressing. Material culture is more susceptible to change than a religious practice and social organization. Also material culture changes whether there is a need for it or not.

As in the case of the *purdah* system many traditions grew out of necessity and are being continued when the need for them has ceased to exist. But in some cases, however, when the coercive force behind a tradition gets completely weakened, the tradition goes out of use, e.g., it was a part of ritual tradition that a Brahmin should wash his feet before entering his house. After taking a bath early in the morning he used to do this in the village tank. The housewife used to keep a clean brass pot of water at the entrance of the house for this purpose. After washing his feet the man entered his house to go to the family shrine where he began his worship of the deities.

This practice is no longer observed by Brahmins because most people take a bath at home and do not observe morning worship. Many of them also have given up taking an early bath because the ritual compulsion has declined.

In Orissa the Brahmin settlements (*Sasan*) are one of the most important traditional institutions established by the

Gajapati Rajas. There are 16 Sasan villages and the representatives from these villages constitute the Muktimandapa Pandit Sabha. Like the latter, the former are the guardians of the Sanskritic and *Sastriya* traditions. The best of them who was an authority on the *Vedas* and the *Dharma granthas* and had acquired full knowledge and competence in military techniques and functioned as the Prime Minister of the Gajapati Rajas.

Similarly the learned and orthodox Brahmins were elected from these villages to represent the Muktimandap Pandit Sabha. But as a result of modern influences the Sasan villages have lost their purity and sanctity and many of the Brahminical traditions are in the process of decline and the leadership provided by the Brahmins in ritual and military matters is now altogether lost. For example, the tradition of *Rajaguru* (Prime Ministership) has long been extinct and all the functions of cultural and military leadership associated with it have fallen into disuse.

The Brahmins of Sasan villages had no social relationship with low caste Brahmins of other villages. We, however, find in one particular case that in order to enhance his prestige and position a wealthy man from the lower castes has already established marital relationship with the founder family of a Sasan village. He has thereby not only broken the tradition of the Sasan village, but also claimed for himself certain privileges like getting the first *hakara* (the share of food offered to the village deities to which the founder family is entitled). The Brahmins of the Sasan village put up strong resistance to his having the first share as they do not recognize him on a level with themselves. But he does try to appropriate the first share on the basis of his marital relationship with the family and as the legal heir of its property. This conflict between the Sasan Brahmins and the rich man has led not only to expensive litigation but has also compiled the Sasan Brahmins to discontinue the *hakara* system to defeat the purpose of the rich man.

As in this case, many other traditions which were observed in the Sasan villages and for which they were enjoying the apex position in the Hindu social system are being dropped resulting in loss of prestige to the Sasan Brahmins. To illustrate, the Brahmins of the Sasan villages were prohibited from taking up the following four occupations or any work connected with them:

1. *Batua* —Assistant to a priest or *panda* helping him as a *pilgrim-guide*
2. *Ghatua* —Performing *Sankalpa* in the *Panch Tirthas* for the pilgrims
3. *Natua* —Dancing and other kinds of theatrical performances
4. *Chhatia* —Police sepoy or constable.

Many poor Brahmins of the Sasan villages who have taken to these professions as a source of livelihood are disqualified from any share of the consecrated food of Lord Jagannath which is distributed daily among the Pandits of Muktimandapa. Those Brahmins who are in such forbidden services are also deprived of the privileges of sitting on the Muktimandapa and having their share of the consecrated food. Being forced by their economic condition they had to give up the tradition which had little economic value for their money-making employment opportunities. For them 'Feed your stomach in any way you like and there is nothing wrong in it' has been their motto of life. Those who were at one time the keepers of the Sanskritic and *Sastriya* traditions are being secularized as a result of the weakening of the Hindu belief system and social order.

In all this the decline of royal power, and deterioration of palace and temple rituals, have been responsible with severe repercussions on each of the inter-linking elements of the Sacred Complex and serious dislocations throughout the whole nexus. The Gajapati Rajas who were the guardians of the Sacred Complex and cultural traditions were considered so sacred that contact with the ordinary public was beyond imagination. But a study of the life style of the recent Rajas of Puri, particularly the last two Rajas, indicates growing secularization in their role sand behaviour. Consequently there has been ritual attenuation in the palace and the sanctity of the Gajapati Raja as Chalanti Vishnu is in a state of great disrepute. Gradual economic impoverishment has been an important factor among others for disintegration of sanctity of the Raja and attenuation of the palace and temple rituals. The exile of the recent Rajas to expensive living in hotels and their secular education are among the causes for increased palace expenditure and consequent resort of the Rajas to the temple treasury. As a result the management of the temple grew from bad to worse. This had led the Government to control the temple affairs which were once the Gajapati Raja's monopoly and prerogative.

Paralleling the deterioration of palace ritual, there have been irregularities in the performance of the duties, and deterioration in both the quality and quantity of food offered to Lord Jagannath. Quarrels among the *Sebaks*, between the *Sebuks* and the Gevernment's administrative staff, and also with the Raja are repeated occurrences. The rising cost of living and the inadequacy of the food gifts to maintain their growing families have compelled the *Sebaks* to take up services to supplement their temple income. The training given by the several monasteries like the Sankaracharya to the sons of the *Sebaks* in the methods of performing ritual services is now being discontinued. Thus the *sebaks* on economic grounds have become less religious and devotional and more money-minded and businesslike.

The new *Sebaks* are often without training in Sanskritic hymns and ritual procedures in the temple. On the whole the situation at the temple is now in such a state that it may soon become a National Antiquity with pilgrims for tourists, and the pilgrim resthouses (*Dharmasalas*) for tourist hotels (*Pantha Nibasa*).

Again monasteries like the Sankaracharya and several others have indulged in litigation and more luxurious living. They have discontinued many of their services to the temple for which they enjoy the use of the landed property belonging to Lord Jagannath.

Many of these changes can also be attributed to impoverishment of the temple estates in which Raja's mismanagement is only one factor; the inflationary spiral is the other. The tenants or the share croppers holding the land of Lord Jagannath are making demands and no longer pay their share of the full amount.

Further a portion of the income from the temple estate is spent in the maintenance of the temple office now staffed by officials installed by the Government at a higher rate of pay than formerly.

In all this the growing control of the secular political power has deprived the Raja of political, economic, and moral support. The tributary Rajas have not rallied to his support but seem to be following various paths dictated by personal convenience. The State Government is attemping to devise means to rectify the mismanagement in ritual and other performances in the temple. They have by law made the Raja of Puri withdraw his administrative control over the temple. They have bureaucratized the services of the *sebaks* by enforcing a record of rights. This is an attempt to transfer patterns of secular administration to a sacred institution even though the secular administrative structure is often far from successful in even the area for which it was devised. The Raja tried his best to combat Government forces by filing suits in Courts of Law and failed to establish his rights. The consequences were frustration, discontent, and excessive alcoholic habits.

To sum up, therefore, all these forces have combined to destroy the morale of the *Sebaks*, alienated the monasteries and weakened royal power. Essentially the cult of Jagannath rests on five pillars: (1) The Raja of Puri and the tributary Rajas of the Eastern States Agencies, (2) the temple servants,

(3) the monastic orders, (4) the pilgrims, and (5) the increasingly secular government. These institutions are all closely related. A dislocation in any one of them can result in severe repercussions throughout the whole nexus. Further, this nexus must be viewed against a background of broader socio-economic changes in India as a whole.

Nevertheless it is clear that facts change before theory, i.e., theory is more tenacious than reality. People in the rural areas do not regard the Raja of Puri as unworthy as the leaders of the State and literate city people do. In fact, the temple and the Raja are not matters of concern to the rustic people of Orissa. In India the leaders initiate changes, and they change before their followers. All the hue and cry of the leaders against mismanagement in the temple have no effect upon the villagers. They continue to believe the Jagannath as Great God and the king as the Chalanti Vishnu. Therefore, it is obvious that the struggle for secularization goes to a great extent within leadership groups. The Indian revolution is from on top rather than from the bottom.